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ANDREW JACKSON DOWNING

*Frontispiece*

# Landscape Gardening

ANDREW JACKSON DOWNING

TENTH EDITION

REVISED BY

FRANK A. WAUGH

AND INCLUDING MANY CHAPTERS FROM  
DOWNING'S "RURAL ESSAYS"

*ILLUSTRATED*

NEW YORK

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TO  
JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, LL.D.,  
EX-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES;  
THE LOVER OF RURAL PURSUITS,  
AS WELL AS  
THE DISTINGUISHED PATRIOT, STATESMAN,  
AND SAGE;  
THIS VOLUME  
BY PERMISSION,  
IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED,  
BY HIS FRIEND,  
THE AUTHOR.

*Original dedication by A. J. D.*



## ORIGINAL PREFACE

By A. J. D.

A taste for rural improvements of every description is advancing silently, but with great rapidity in this country. While yet in the far west the pioneer constructs his rude hut of logs for a dwelling, and sweeps away with his axe the lofty forest trees that encumber the ground, in the older portions of the Union, bordering the Atlantic, we are surrounded by all the luxuries and refinements that belong to an old and long cultivated country. Within the last ten years, especially, the evidences of the growing wealth and prosperity of our citizens have become apparent in the great increase of elegant cottage and villa residences on the banks of our noble rivers, along our rich valleys, and wherever nature seems to invite us by her rich and varied charms.

In all the expenditure of means in these improvements, amounting in the aggregate to an immense sum, professional talent is seldom employed in Architecture or Landscape Gardening, but almost every man fancies himself an amateur, and endeavors to plan and arrange his own residence. With but little practical knowledge, and few correct principles for his guidance, it is not surprising that we witness much incongruity and great waste of time and money. Even those who are familiar with foreign works on the subject in question labor under many obstacles in practice, which grow out of the difference in our soil and climate, or our social and political position.

These views have so often presented themselves to me of late, and have been so frequently urged by persons desiring advice, that I have ventured to prepare the present volume, in the hope of supplying, in some degree, the desideratum so much felt at present. While we have treatises, in abundance, on the various departments of the arts and

sciences, there has not appeared even a single essay on the elegant art of Landscape Gardening. Hundreds of individuals who wish to ornament their grounds and embellish their places, are at a loss how to proceed, from the want of some *leading principles*, with the knowledge of which they would find it comparatively easy to produce delightful and satisfactory results.

In the following pages I have attempted to trace out such principles, and to suggest practicable methods of embellishing our rural residences, on a scale commensurate to the views and means of our proprietors. While I have availed myself of the works of European authors, and especially those of Britain, where Landscape Gardening was first raised to the rank of a fine art, I have also endeavored to adapt my suggestions especially to this country and to the peculiar wants of its inhabitants.

As a people descended from the English stock, we inherit much of the ardent love of rural life and its pursuits which belongs to that nation; but our peculiar position, in a new world that required a population full of enterprise and energy to subdue and improve its vast territory, has, until lately, left but little time to cultivate a taste for rural embellishment. But in the older states, as wealth has accumulated, the country becomes populous, and society more fixed in its character, a return to those simple and fascinating enjoyments to be found in country life and rural pursuits is witnessed on every side. And to this innate feeling, out of which grows a strong attachment to natal soil, we must look for a counterpoise to the great tendency towards constant change, and the restless spirit of emigration, which form part of our national character; and which, though to a certain extent highly necessary to our national prosperity, are, on the other hand, opposed to social and domestic happiness. "In the midst of the continual movement which agitates a democratic community," says the most philosophical writer who has yet discussed our institutions, "the tie which unites one generation to another is relaxed or broken; every man readily loses the



trace of the ideas of his forefathers, or takes no care about them."

The love of country is inseparably connected with the *love of home*. Whatever, therefore, leads man to assemble the comforts and elegancies of life around his habitation, tends to increase local attachments, and render domestic life more delightful; thus not only augmenting his own enjoyment, but strengthening his patriotism, and making him a better citizen. And there is no employment or recreation which affords the mind greater or more permanent satisfaction, than that of cultivating the earth and adorning our own property. "God Almighty first planted a garden; and, indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures," says Lord Bacon. And as the first man was shut out from the *garden*, in the cultivation of which no alloy was mixed with his happiness, the desire to return to it seems to be implanted by nature, more or less strongly, in every heart.

In Landscape Gardening the country gentleman of leisure finds a resource of the most agreeable nature. While there is no more rational pleasure than that derived from its practice by him, who

"Plucks life's roses in his quiet fields,"

the enjoyment drawn from it (unlike many other amusements) is unembittered by the after recollection of pain or injury inflicted on others, or the loss of moral rectitude. In rendering his home more beautiful, he not only contributes to the happiness of his own family, but improves the taste, and adds loveliness to the country at large. There is, perhaps, something exclusive in the taste for some of the fine arts. A collection of pictures, for example, is comparatively shut up from the world, in the private gallery. But the sylvan and floral collections, — the groves and gardens, which surround the country residence of the man of taste, — are confined by no barriers narrower than the blue heaven above and around them. The taste and the treasures, gradually, but certainly, creep beyond the

nominal boundaries of the estate, and re-appear in the pot of flowers in the window, or the luxuriant, blossoming vines which clamber over the porch of the humblest cottage by the way side.

In the present volume I have sought, by rendering familiar to the reader most of the beautiful sylvan materials of the art, and by describing their peculiar effects in Landscape Gardening, to encourage a taste among general readers. And I have also endeavored to place before the amateur such directions and guiding principles as, it is hoped, will assist him materially in laying out his grounds and arranging the general scenery of his residence.

The lively interest of late manifested in Rural Architecture, and its close connection with Landscape Gardening, have induced me to devote a portion of this work to the consideration of buildings in rural scenery.

I take pleasure in acknowledging my obligations and returning thanks to my valued correspondent, J. C. Loudon, Esq., F. L. S., etc., of London, the most distinguished gardening author of the age, for the illustrations and description of the English Suburban Cottage in the Appendix; to the several gentlemen in this country who have kindly furnished me with plans or drawings of their residences; and to A. J. Davis, Esq., of New York, and J. Notman, Esq., of Philadelphia, architects, for architectural drawings and descriptions.

## PREFACE BY THE EDITOR

The present Tenth Edition of Downing's famous Landscape Gardening takes extensive liberties with the original materials, rearranging and recombining them with little regard to their early relationships. The intention, however, has been, not so much to make the usual revision of an old book as to bring together from all Mr. Downing's writings the best portions of his work bearing directly on the subject of Landscape Gardening.

There are two principal sources of these materials. First there are the early editions of the book on Landscape Gardening; second are the Rural Essays, written first as editorials for the Horticulturist and afterward collected by Mr. George William Curtis and published in book form.

Naturally it has been necessary to eliminate many chapters and some few passages in other chapters, and such eliminations have, of course, been difficult. The matter is all good — all interesting. But some of it has been outgrown by changed conditions and a good deal of it does not pertain to the main theme. Mr. Downing was a pomologist and an architect as well as a landscape gardener, and he wrote informingly also of general agriculture and of his travels in Europe. The student who desires to study this great American writer and genius will of course consult his original works in full; but it is hoped that the one who merely wants the benefit of Mr. Downing's views on Landscape Gardening will find these fully set forth and logically arranged in the present edition.

The lovers of Downing have always been numerous and urgent in America. To those now living the editor offers this present book with much trepidation. To them it must seem presumptuous to cut and fit so freely with the works of the revered master. Let such remember, however, that the editor has been actuated by the same deep love and

respect which they feel. Let them consider further that the new book is offered less to the older audience, already readers of Downing, than to the new and larger company of those who, having grown up wholly in present times, are not yet his students and admirers. If a new edition of his works will help to preserve his memory, to spread his wise and kindly instruction and to extend his beneficent influence to a new generation surely everyone can rejoice in that result.

FRANK A. WAUGH.

AMHERST, MASS.,  
*January 1, 1921.*

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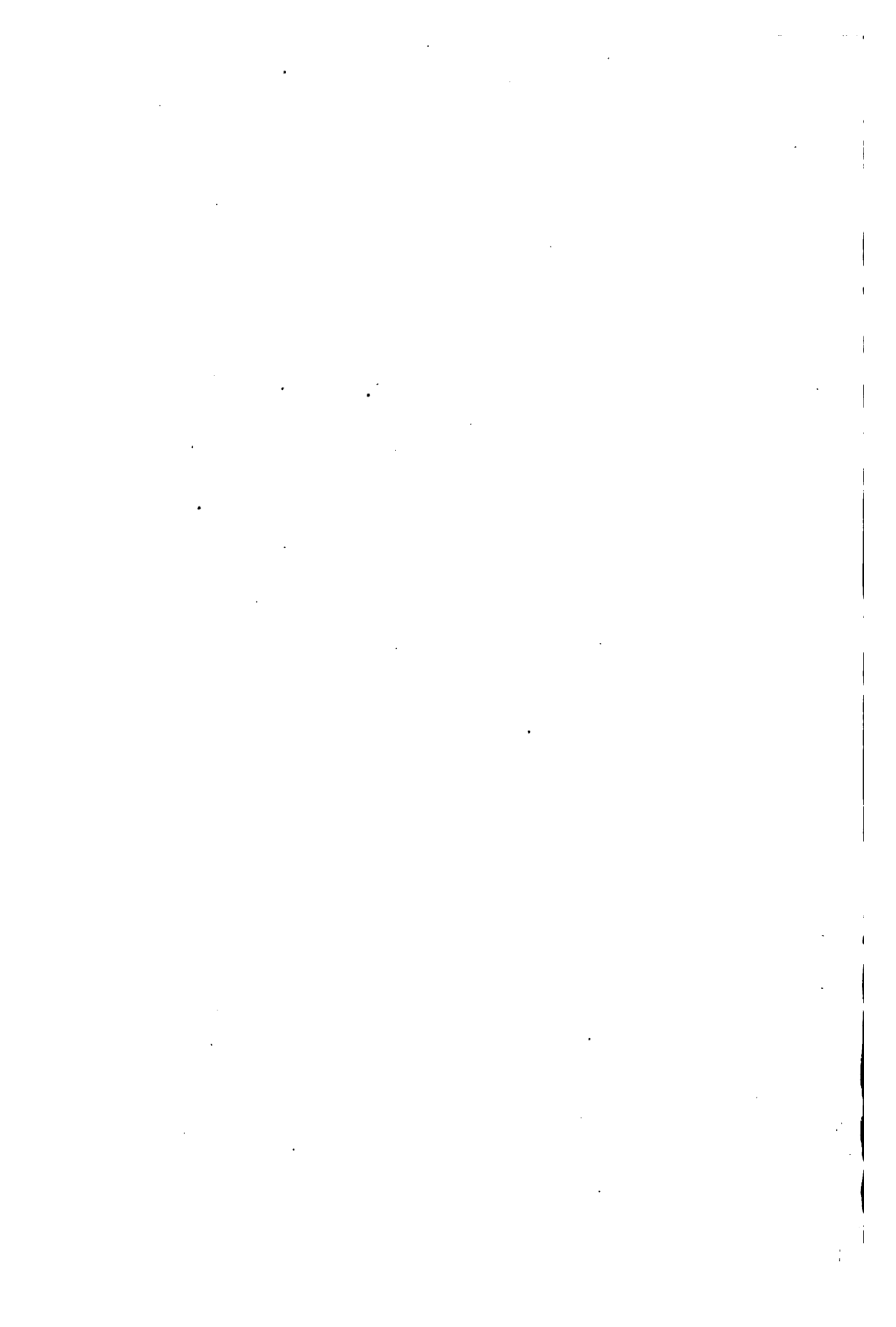


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Librarian, Massachusetts Agricultural College

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# Landscape Gardening

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## CHAPTER I

### *HISTORICAL SKETCHES*

“L’un à nos yeux présente  
D’un dessein régulier l’ordonnance imposante,  
Prête aux champs des beautés qu’ils ne connaissent pas,  
D’une pompe étrangère embellit leur appas,  
Donne aux arbres des lois, aux ondes des entraves,  
Et, despote orgueilleux, brille entouré d’esclaves;  
Son air est moins riant et plus majestueux  
L’autre, de la nature amant respectueux,  
L’orne sans la farder, traite avec indulgence  
Ses caprices charmants, sa noble négligence,  
Sa marche irrégulière, et fait naître avec art  
Des beautés du désordre, et même du hasard.”

DELILLE.

“OUR first, most endearing, and most sacred associations,” says the amiable Mrs. Hofland, “are connected with gardens; our most simple and most refined perceptions of beauty are combined with them.” And we may add to this, that Landscape Gardening, which is an artistical combination of the beautiful in nature and art — an union of natural expression and harmonious cultivation — is capable of affording us the highest and most intellectual enjoyment to be found in any cares or pleasures belonging to the soil.

The development of the beautiful is the end and aim of Landscape Gardening, as it is of all other fine arts. The ancients sought to attain this by a studied and elegant regularity of design in their gardens; the moderns, by the creation or improvement of grounds which, though of lim-

ited extent, exhibit a highly graceful or picturesque epitome of natural beauty. Landscape Gardening differs from gardening in its common sense, in embracing the whole scene immediately about a country house, which it softens and refines, or renders more spirited and striking by the aid of art. In it we seek to embody our *ideal* of a rural home; not through plots of fruit trees, and beds of choice flowers, though these have their place, but by collecting and combining beautiful forms in trees, surfaces of ground, buildings, and walks, in the landscape surrounding us. It is, in short, the beautiful, embodied in a home scene. And we attain it by the removal or concealment of everything uncouth and discordant, and by the introduction and preservation of forms pleasing in their expression, their outlines, and their fitness for the abode of man. In the orchard, we hope to gratify the palate; in the flower garden, the eye and the smell; but in the landscape garden we appeal to that sense of the beautiful and the perfect, which is one of the highest attributes of our nature.

This embellishment of nature, which we call Landscape Gardening, springs naturally from a love of country life, an attachment to a certain spot, and a desire to render that place attractive — a feeling which seems more or less strongly fixed in the minds of all men. But we should convey a false impression, were we to state that it may be applied with equal success to residences of every class and size, in the country. Lawn and trees, being its two essential elements, some of the beauties of Landscape Gardening may, indeed, be shown wherever a rood of grass surface and half a dozen trees are within our reach; we may, even with such scanty space, have tasteful grouping, varied surface, and agreeably curved walks; but our art, to appear to advantage, requires some extent of surface — its lines should lose themselves indefinitely, and unite agreeably and gradually with those of the surrounding country.

In the case of large landed estates, its capabilities may be displayed to their full extent, as from fifty to five hundred acres may be devoted to a park or pleasure grounds.

Most of its beauty, and all its charms, may, however, be enjoyed in ten or twenty acres, fortunately situated, and well treated; and Landscape Gardening, in America, combined and working in harmony as it is with our fine scenery, is already beginning to give us results scarcely less beautiful than those produced by its finest efforts abroad. The lovely villa residences of our noble river and lake margins, when well treated — even in a few acres of tasteful foreground, — seem so entirely to appropriate the whole adjacent landscape, and to mingle so sweetly in their outlines with the woods, the valleys, and shores around them, that the effects are often truly enchanting.

But if Landscape Gardening, in its proper sense, cannot be applied to the embellishment of the smallest cottage residences in the country, its principles may be studied with advantage, even by him who has only three trees to plant for ornament; and we hope no one will think his grounds too small, to feel willing to add something to the general amount of beauty in the country. If the possessor of the cottage acre would embellish in accordance with propriety, he must not, as we have sometimes seen, render the whole ridiculous by aiming at ambitious and costly embellishments; but he will rather seek to delight us by the good taste evinced in the *tasteful simplicity* of the whole arrangement. And if the proprietors of our country villas, in their improvements, are more likely to run into any one error than another, we fear it will be that of too great a desire for display — too many vases, temples, and seats, — and too little purity and simplicity of general effect.

The inquiring reader will perhaps be glad to have a glance at the history and progress of the art of tasteful gardening; a recurrence to which, as well as to the history of the fine arts, will afford abundant proof that, in the first stage or infancy of all these arts, while the perception of their ultimate capabilities is yet crude and imperfect, mankind has, in every instance, been completely satisfied with the mere exhibition of *design* or *art*. Thus in sculpture the first statues were only attempts to imitate rudely the *form*

of a human figure, or in painting, to represent that of a tree: the skill of the artist, in effecting an imitation successfully, being sufficient to excite the astonishment and admiration of those who had not yet made such advances as to enable them to appreciate the superior beauty of *expression*.

Landscape Gardening is, indeed, only a modern word, first coined, we believe, by Shenstone.

The most distinguished English landscape gardeners of recent date, are the late Humphrey Repton, who died in 1818; and since him John Claudius Loudon \* better known in this country, as the celebrated gardening author. Repton's taste in Landscape Gardening was cultivated and elegant, and many of the finest parks and pleasure grounds of England, at the present day, bear witness to the skill and harmony of his designs. His published works are full of instructive hints, and at Cobham Hall, one of the finest seats in Britain, is an inscription to his memory, by Lord Darnley.

Mr. Loudon's writings and labors in tasteful gardening, are too well known, to render it necessary that we should do more than allude to them here. Much of what is known of the art in this country undoubtedly is, more or less directly, to be referred to the influence of his published works. Although he is, as it seems to us, somewhat deficient as an artist in imagination, no previous author ever deduced, so clearly, sound artistical principles in Landscape Gardening and Rural Architecture; and fitness, good sense, and beauty, are combined with much unity of feeling in all his works.

\* Repton was easily the greatest landscape gardener of his day. He carried out extensive works in England and his writings on the subject were fresh, vigorous and permanently valuable. Of these there were various editions, one of the best under the title of "Landscape Gardening," having been edited by J. C. Loudon in 1840. An abridged edition has been more recently published in America, edited by Mr. John Nolen. ("The Art of Landscape Gardening," Boston, 1908.) The cyclopedic works of Loudon had some vogue in America in their day, but have long since been completely superseded by the indigenous literature of gardening. — F. A. W.

As the modern style owes its origin mainly to the English, so it has also been developed and carried to its greatest perfection in the British Islands. The law of primogeniture, which has there so long existed, in itself, contributes greatly to the continual improvement and embellishment



FIG. 1. GARDEN STAIRWAY

of those vast landed estates, that remain perpetually in the hands of the same family. Magnificent buildings, added to by each succeeding generation, who often preserve also the older portions with the most scrupulous care; wide spread parks, clothed with a thick velvet turf, which, amid their moist atmosphere, preserves during great part of the year an emerald greenness — studded with noble oaks and other forest trees which number centuries of growth and maturity; these advantages, in the hands of the most in-

telligent and the wealthiest aristocracy in the world, have indeed made almost an entire landscape garden of "merry England." Among a multitude of splendid examples of these noble residences, we will only refer the reader to the celebrated Blenheim, the seat of the Duke of Marlborough, where the lake alone (probably the largest piece of artificial water in the world) covers a surface of two hundred acres: Chatsworth, the varied and magnificent seat of the Duke of Devonshire, where there are scenes illustrative of almost every style of the art: and Woburn Abbey, the grounds of which are full of the choicest specimens of trees and plants, and where the park, like that of Ashbridge, Arundel Castle, and several other private residences in England, is only embraced within a circumference of from ten to twenty miles.

On the continent of Europe, though there are a multitude of examples of the modern style of landscape gardening, which is there called the *English* or *natural* style, yet in the neighborhood of many of the capitals, especially those of the south of Europe, the taste for the geometric or ancient style of gardening still prevails to a considerable extent; partially, no doubt, because that style admits, with more facility, of those classical and architectural accompaniments of vases, statues, busts, etc., the passion for which pervades a people rich in ancient and modern sculptural works of art. Indeed many of the gardens on the continent are more striking from their numerous sculpturesque ornaments, interspersed with fountains and jets-d'eau, than from the beauty or rarity of their vegetation, or from their arrangement.

In the United States, it is highly improbable that we shall ever witness such splendid examples of landscape gardens as those abroad, to which we have alluded.\* Here the rights of man are held to be equal; and if there are no enormous parks, and no class of men whose wealth is hered-

\* Now, in 1921, one is strongly inclined to doubt Mr. Downing's prediction. It seems quite possible that America may soon show, if she does not already possess, many of the finest examples of landscape gardening in the world, both public and private. — F. A. W.



itary, there is, at least, what is more gratifying to the feelings of the philanthropist, the almost entire absence of a very poor class in the country; while we have, on the other hand, a large class of independent landholders, who are able to assemble around them, not only the useful and convenient, but the agreeable and beautiful, in country life.

The number of individuals among us who possess wealth and refinement sufficient to enable them to enjoy the pleasures of a country life, and who desire in their private residences so much of the beauties of landscape gardening and rural embellishment as may be had without any enormous expenditure of means, is every day increasing. And although, until lately, a very meagre plan of laying out the grounds of a residence, was all that we could lay claim to, yet the taste for elegant rural improvements is advancing now so rapidly, that we have no hesitation in predicting that in half a century more, there will exist a greater number of beautiful villas and country seats of moderate extent, in the Atlantic States, than in any country in Europe, England alone excepted. With us, a feeling, a taste, or an improvement, is contagious; and once fairly appreciated and established in one portion of the country, it is disseminated with a celerity that is indeed wonderful, to every other portion. And though it is necessarily the case where amateurs of any art are more numerous than its professors, that there will be, in devising and carrying plans into execution, many specimens of bad taste, and perhaps a sufficient number of efforts to improve without any real taste whatever, still we are convinced the effect of our rural embellishments \* will in the end be highly agreeable, as a

\* It may be observed that Mr. Downing speaks constantly of "embellishments." The modern Landscape Gardener abhors this word, as all phrases referring to "ornamental" treatment. This is because the modern professional Landscape Gardener thinks of his art as something fundamental, radical, as dealing with the most elemental facts of structure, rather than as concerned with any superficial "embellishment." This change of feeling marks a distinct professional advance, though, unfortunately, the lay public still thinks of Landscape Gardening as mainly an incidental ornamental afterthought — a sort of horticultural camouflage to gross utilities. — F. A. W.

false taste is not likely to be a permanent one in a community where everything is so much the subject of criticism.

With regard to the literature and practice of Landscape Gardening as an art, in North America, almost everything is yet before us, comparatively little having yet been done. Almost all the improvements of the grounds of our finest country residences, have been carried on under the direction of the proprietors themselves, suggested by their own good taste, in many instances improved by the study of European authors, or by a personal inspection of the finest places abroad. The only American work previously published which treats directly of Landscape Gardening, is the *American Gardener's Calendar*, by Bernard McMahon of Philadelphia. The only practitioner of the art, of any note, was the late M. Parmentier of Brooklyn, Long Island.\*

M. André Parmentier was the brother of that celebrated horticulturist, the Chevalier Parmentier, Mayor of Enghien, Holland. He emigrated to this country about the year 1824, and in the Horticultural Nurseries which he established at Brooklyn, he gave a specimen of the natural style of laying out grounds, combined with a scientific arrangement of plants, which excited public curiosity, and contributed not a little to the dissemination of a taste for the natural mode of landscape gardening.

During M. Parmentier's residence on Long Island, he was almost constantly applied to for plans for laying out the grounds of country seats, by persons in various parts of the Union, as well as in the immediate proximity of New York. In many cases he not only surveyed the demesne to be improved, but furnished the plants and trees necessary to carry out his designs. Several plans were prepared by him for residences of note in the Southern States; and two or three places in Upper Canada, especially near Montreal, were, we believe, laid out by his own hands and stocked from his nursery grounds. In his periodical catalogue, he arranged the hardy trees and shrubs that flourish

\* These statements are obviously out of date in 1921, but are interesting historically as showing what sort of a country Mr. Downing found himself in in 1841.

in this latitude in classes, according to their height, etc., and published a short treatise on the superior claims of the natural, over the formal or geometric style of laying out grounds. In short, we consider M. Parmentier's labors and examples as having effected, directly, far more for landscape gardening in America, than those of any other individual whatever.

The introduction of tasteful gardening in this country is, of course, of a very recent date. But so long ago as from 25 to 50 years, there were several country residences highly remarkable for extent, elegance of arrangement, and the highest order and keeping. Among these, we desire especially to record here the celebrated seats of Chancellor Livingston, Wm. Hamilton, Esq., Theodore Lyman, Esq., and Judge Peters.

*Woodlands*, the seat of the Hamilton family, near Philadelphia, was, so long ago as 1805, highly celebrated for its gardening beauties. The refined taste and the wealth of its accomplished owner, were freely lavished in its improvement and embellishment; and at a time when the introduction of rare exotics was attended with a vast deal of risk and trouble, the extensive green-houses and orangeries of this seat contained all the richest treasures of the exotic flora, and among other excellent gardeners employed, was the distinguished botanist Pursh, whose enthusiastic taste in his favorite science was promoted and aided by Mr. Hamilton. The extensive pleasure grounds were judiciously planted, singly and in groups, with a great variety of the finest species of trees. The attention of the visitor to this place is now arrested by two very large specimens of that curious tree, the Japanese Ginko (*Salisburia*), 60 or 70 feet high, perhaps the finest in Europe or America, by the noble magnolias, and the rich park-like appearance of some of the plantations of the finest native and foreign oaks. From the recent unhealthiness of this portion of the Schuylkill, *Woodlands* has fallen into decay, but there can be no question that it was, for a long time, the most tasteful and beautiful residence in America.

The seat of the late Judge Peters, about five miles from Philadelphia, was, 30 years ago, a noted specimen of the ancient school of landscape gardening. Its proprietor had a most extended reputation as a scientific agriculturist, and his place was also no less remarkable for the design and culture of its pleasure-grounds, than for the excellence of its farm. Long and stately avenues, with vistas terminated by obelisks, a garden adorned with marble vases, busts, and statues, and pleasure grounds filled with the rarest trees and shrubs, were conspicuous features here. Some of the latter are now so remarkable as to attract strongly the attention of the visitor. Among them, is the chestnut planted by Washington, which produces the largest and finest fruit; very large hollies; and a curious old box-tree much higher than the mansion near which it stands. But the most striking feature now, is the still remaining grand old avenue of hemlocks. Many of these trees, which were planted 100 years ago, are now venerable specimens, ninety feet high, whose huge trunks and wide spread branches are in many cases densely wreathed and draped with masses of English Ivy, forming the most picturesque sylvan objects we ever beheld.

*Lemon Hill*, half a mile above the Fairmount water-works of Philadelphia, was, 20 years ago, the most perfect specimen of the geometric mode in America, and since its destruction by the extension of the city, a few years since, there is nothing comparable with it, in that style, among us. All the symmetry, uniformity, and high art of the old school, were displayed here in artificial plantations, formal gardens with trellises, grottoes, spring-houses, temples, statues, and vases, with numerous ponds of water, jets-d'eau, and other water-works, parterres and an extensive range of hot-houses. The effect of this garden was brilliant and striking; its position, on the lovely banks of the Schuylkill, admirable; and its liberal proprietor, Mr. Pratt, by opening it freely to the public, greatly increased the popular taste in the neighborhood of that city.

On the Hudson, the show place of the last age was the

still interesting *Clermont*, then the residence of Chancellor Livingston. Its level or gently undulating lawn, four or five miles in length, the rich native woods, and the long vistas of planted avenues, added to its fine water view, rendered this a noble place. The mansion, the green-houses, and the gardens, show something of the French taste in design, which Mr. Livingston's residence abroad, at the time when that mode was popular, no doubt, led him to adopt. The finest yellow locusts in America are now standing in the pleasure-grounds here, and the gardens contain many specimens of fruit trees, the first of their sorts introduced into the Union.

*Waltham House*, about nine miles from Boston, was, 25 years ago, one of the oldest and finest places, as regards Landscape Gardening. Its owner, the late Hon. T. Lyman, was a highly-accomplished man, and the grounds at Waltham House bear witness to a refined and elegant taste in rural improvement. A fine level park, a mile in length, enriched with groups of English limes, elms, and oaks, and rich masses of native wood, watered by a fine stream and stocked with deer, were the leading features of the place at that time; and this, and Woodlands, were the two best specimens of the modern style, as Judge Peters' seat, Lemon Hill, and Clermont, were of the ancient style, in the earliest period of the history of Landscape Gardening among us.

There is no part of the Union where the taste in Landscape Gardening is so far advanced, as on the middle portion of the Hudson. The natural scenery is of the finest character, and places but a mile or two apart often possess, from the constantly varying forms of the water, shores, and distant hills, widely different kinds of home landscape and distant view. Standing in the grounds of some of the finest of these seats, the eye beholds only the soft foreground of smooth lawn, the rich groups of trees shutting out all neighboring tracts, the lake-like expanse of water, and, closing the distance, a fine range of wooded mountain. A residence here of but a hundred acres, so fortunately are

these disposed by nature, seems to appropriate the whole scenery round, and to be a thousand in extent.

At the present time, our handsome villa residences are becoming every day more numerous, and it would require much more space than our present limits, to enumerate all the tasteful rural country places within our knowledge, many of which have been newly laid out, or greatly improved within a few years. But we consider it so important and instructive to the novice in the art of Landscape Gardening to examine, personally, country seats of a highly tasteful character, that we shall venture to refer the reader to a few of those which have now a reputation among us as elegant country residences.

*Hyde Park*, on the Hudson, formerly the seat of the late Dr. Hosack, now of W. Langdon, Esq., has been justly celebrated as one of the finest specimens of the modern style of Landscape Gardening in America. Nature has, indeed, done much for this place, as the grounds are finely varied, beautifully watered by a lively stream, and the views are inexpressibly striking from the neighborhood of the house itself, including, as they do, the noble Hudson for sixty miles in its course, through rich valleys and bold mountains. But the efforts of art are not unworthy so rare a locality; and while the native woods, and beautifully undulating surface, are preserved in their original state, the pleasure-grounds, roads, walks, drives and new plantations, have been laid out in such a judicious manner as to heighten the charms of nature. Large and costly hot-houses were erected by Dr. Hosack, with also entrance lodges at two points on the estate, a fine bridge over the stream, and numerous pavilions and seats commanding extensive prospects; in short, nothing was spared to render this a complete residence. The park, which at one time contained some fine deer, afforded a delightful drive within itself, as the whole estate numbered about seven hundred acres. The plans for laying out the grounds were furnished by Parmentier, and architects from New York were employed in designing and erecting the buildings. For a long time,

this was the finest seat in America, but there are now many rivals to this claim.

*The Manor of Livingston*, lately the seat of Mrs. Mary Livingston (but now of Jacob Le Roy, Esq.), is seven miles east of the city of Hudson. The mansion stands in the midst of a fine park, rising gradually from the level of a rich inland country, and commanding prospects for sixty miles around. The park is, perhaps, the most remarkable in America, for the noble simplicity of its character, and the perfect order in which it is kept. The turf is, everywhere, short and velvet-like, the gravel-roads scrupulously firm and smooth, and near the house are the largest and most superb evergreens. The mansion is one of the chastest specimens of the Grecian style, and there is an air of great dignity about the whole demesne.

*Blithewood*, formerly the seat of R. Donaldson, Esq., (now John Bard, Esq.), near Barrytown, on the Hudson, is one of the most charming villa residences in the Union. The natural scenery here, is nowhere surpassed in its enchanting union of softness and dignity — the river being four miles wide, its placid bosom broken only by islands and gleaming sails, and the horizon grandly closing in with the tall blue summits of the distant Kaatskills. The smiling, gently varied lawn is studded with groups and masses of fine forest and ornamental trees, beneath which are walks leading in easy curves to rustic seats, and summer houses placed in secluded spots, or to openings affording most lovely prospects. In various situations near the house and upon the lawn, sculptured vases of Maltese stone are also disposed in such a manner as to give a refined and classic air to the grounds.

As a pendant to this graceful landscape, there is within the grounds scenery of an opposite character, equally wild and picturesque — a fine, bold stream, fringed with woody banks, and dashing over several rocky cascades, thirty or forty feet in height, and falling altogether a hundred feet in a distance of half a mile. There are also, within the grounds, a pretty gardener's lodge, in the rural cottage

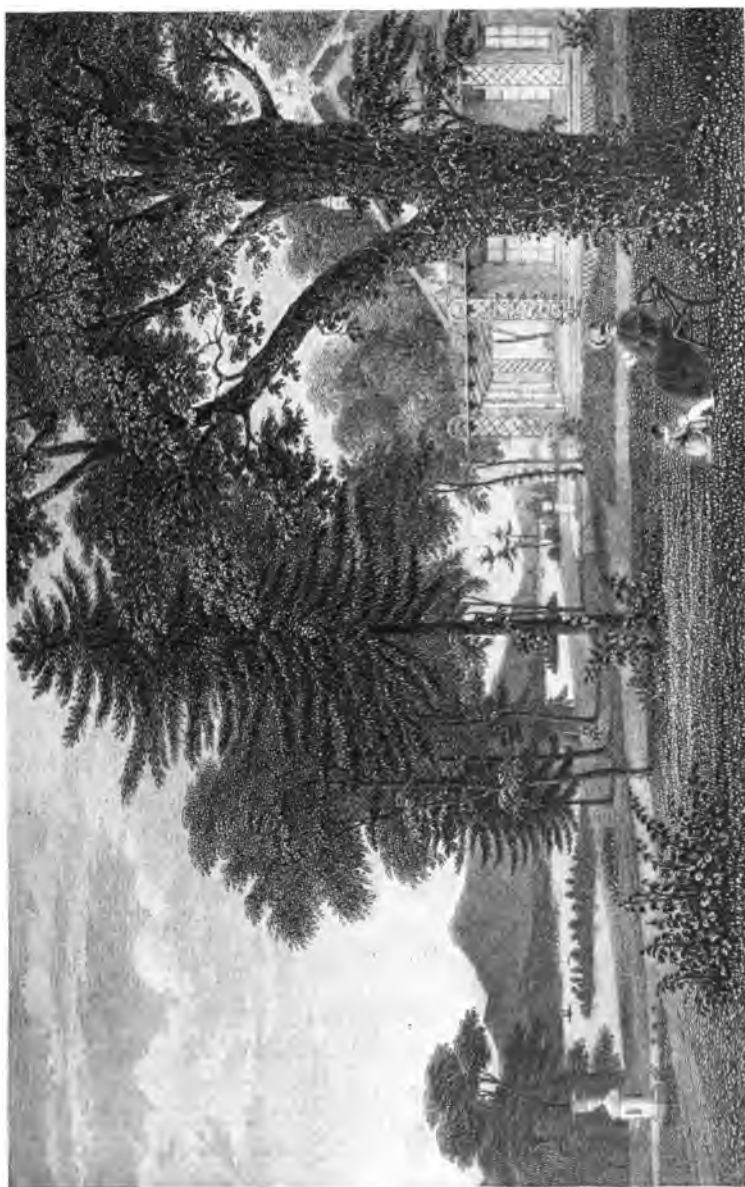


FIG. 2. VIEW ON THE GROUNDS AT BLITHEWOOD, DUCHESS CO., N. Y.



style, and a new entrance lodge by the gate, in the bracketed mode; in short, we can recall no place of moderate extent, where nature and tasteful art are both so harmoniously combined to express grace and elegance.

*Montgomery Place*, the residence of Mrs. Edward Livingston, which is also situated on the Hudson, near Barrytown, deserves a more extended notice than our present limits allow, for it is, as a whole, nowhere surpassed in America, in point of location, natural beauty, or the landscape gardening charms which it exhibits.

It is one of our oldest improved country seats, having been originally the residence of Gen. Montgomery, the hero of Quebec. On the death of his widow it passed into the hands of her brother, Edward Livingston, Esq., the late minister to France, and up to the present moment has always received the most tasteful and judicious treatment.

The lover of the expressive in nature, or the beautiful in art, will find here innumerable subjects for this study. The natural scenery in many portions approaches the character of grandeur, and the foreground of rich woods and lawns, stretching out on all sides of the mountain, completes a home landscape of dignified and elegant seclusion, rarely surpassed in any country.

Among the fine features of this estate are the "Wilderness," a richly wooded and highly picturesque valley, filled with the richest growth of trees, and threaded with dark, intricate, and mazy walks, along which are placed a variety of rustic seats. This valley is musical with the sound of waterfalls, of which there are several fine ones in the bold impetuous stream which finds its course through the lower part of the wilderness. Near the further end of the valley is a beautiful lake, half of which lies cool and dark under the shadow of tall trees, while the other half gleams in the open sunlight.

In a part of the lawn, near the house, yet so surrounded by a dark setting of trees and shrubs as to form a rich picture by itself, is one of the most perfect flower gardens in the country, laid out in the arabesque manner, and glow-

ing with masses of the gayest colors — each bed being composed wholly of a single hue. A large conservatory, an exotic garden, an arboretum, etc., are among the features of interest in this admirable residence. Including a drive through a fine bit of natural wood, south of the mansion, there are five miles of highly varied and picturesque private roads and walks, through the pleasure-grounds of Montgomery Place.

*Ellerslie* is the seat of William Kelly, Esq.\* It is three miles below Rhinebeck. It comprises over six hundred acres, and is one of our finest examples of high keeping and good management, both in an ornamental and an agricultural point of view. The house is conspicuously placed on a commanding natural terrace, with a fair foreground of park surface below it, studded with beautiful groups of elms and oaks, and a very fine reach of river and distant hills. This is one of the most celebrated places on the Hudson, and there are few that so well pay the lover of improved landscape for a visit.

Just below *Ellerslie* are the fine mansion and pleasing grounds of Wm. Emmet, Esq., — the former a stone edifice, in the castellated style, and the latter forming a most agreeable point on the margin of the river.

The seat of Mrs. Gardiner Howland, near New Ham-burgh, is not only beautiful in situation, but is laid out with great care, and is especially remarkable for the many rare trees and shrubs collected in its grounds.

*Wodenethe*, near Fishkill landing, is the seat of H. W. Sargent, Esq., and is a bijou full of interest for the lover of rural beauty; abounding in rare trees, shrubs, and plants, as well as vases, and objects of rural embellishment of all kinds.

*Kenwood*, formerly the residence of J. Rathbone, Esq., is one mile south of Albany. Ten years ago this spot was a wild and densely wooded hill, almost inaccessible. With great taste and industry Mr. Rathbone has converted it into a country residence of much picturesque beauty, erected

\* More recently the home of the late Levi P. Morton.

in the Tudor style, one of the best villas in the country, with a gate-lodge in the same mode, and laid out the grounds with remarkable skill and good taste. There are about 1200 acres in this estate, and pleasure grounds, forcing houses, and gardens, are now flourishing where all was so lately in the rudest state of nature; while, by the judicious preservation of natural wood, the effect of a long cultivated demesne has been given to the whole.

The Manor House of the "*Patroon*" (as the eldest son of the Van Rensselaer family is called) is in the northern suburbs of the city of Albany. The mansion, greatly enlarged and improved a few years since, from the designs of Upjohn, is one of the largest and most admirable in all respects, to be found in the country, and the pleasure-grounds in the rear of the house are tasteful and beautiful.

*Beaverwyck*, a little north of Albany, on the opposite bank of the river, was formerly the seat of Wm. P. Van Rensselaer, Esq. The whole estate is ten or twelve miles square, including the village of Bath on the river shore, and a large farming district. The home residence embraces several hundred acres, with a large level lawn, bordered by highly varied surface of hill and dale. The mansion, one of the first class, is newly erected from the plans of Mr. Diaper, and in its interior — its hall with mosaic floor of polished woods, its marble staircase, frescoed apartments, and spacious adjoining conservatory — is perhaps the most splendid in the Union. The grounds are yet newly laid out, but with much judgment; and *six or seven miles* of winding gravelled roads and walks have been formed — their boundaries now leading over level meadows, and now winding through woody dells. The drives thus afforded, are almost unrivalled in extent and variety, and give the stranger or guest, an opportunity of seeing the near and distant views to the best advantage.

At Tarrytown, is the cottage residence of Washington Irving, which is, in location and accessories, almost the beau ideal of a cottage ornée. The charming manner in which the wild foot-paths, in the neighborhood of this cot-

tage, are conducted among the picturesque dells and banks, is precisely what one would look for here. A little below, Mr. Sheldon's cottage (now Mr. Hoag's), with its pretty lawn and its charming brook, is one of the best specimens of this kind of residence on the river. At Hastings, four or five miles south, is the agreeable seat of Robt. B. Min-turn, Esq.

About twelve miles from New York, on the Sound, is *Hunter's Island*, the seat of John Hunter, Esq., a place of much simplicity and dignity of character. The whole island may be considered an extensive park carpeted with soft lawn, and studded with noble trees. The mansion is simple in its exterior, but internally, is filled with rich treasures of art. The seat of James Munroe, Esq., on the East river in this neighborhood, abounds with beautiful trees, and many other features of interest.

*The Cottage residence* of William H. Aspinwall, Esq., on Staten Island, is a highly picturesque specimen of Landscape Gardening. The house is in the English cottage style, and from its open lawn in front, the eye takes in a wide view of the ocean, the Narrows, and the blue hills of Neversink. In the rear of the cottage, the surface is much broken and varied, and finely wooded and planted. In improving this picturesque site, a nice sense of the charm of natural expression has been evinced; and the sudden variations from smooth open surface, to wild wooden banks, with rocky, moss-covered flights of steps, strike the stranger equally with surprise and delight. A charming greenhouse, a knotted flower-garden, and a pretty, rustic moss-house, are among the interesting points of this spirited place.

The seat of the Wadsworth family, at *Geneseo*, is the finest in the interior of the state of New York. Nothing, indeed, can well be more magnificent than the meadow park at Geneseo. It is more than a thousand acres in extent, lying on each side of the Genesee river, and is filled with thousands of the noblest oaks and elms, many of which, but more especially the oaks, are such trees as we see in the pictures of Claude, or our own Durand; richly developed,

their trunks and branches grand and majestic, their heads full of breadth and grandeur of outline.

These oaks, distributed over a nearly level surface, with the trees disposed either singly or in the finest groups, as if most tastefully planted centuries ago, are solely the work of nature; and yet so entirely is the whole like the grandest planted park, that it is difficult to believe that all is not the work of some master of art, and intended for the accompaniment of a magnificent residence. Some of the trees are five or six hundred years old.

In Connecticut, *Monte Video*, the seat of Daniel Wadsworth, Esq., near Hartford, is worthy of commendation, as it evinces a good deal of beauty in its grounds, and is one of the most tasteful in the state. The residence of James Hillhouse, Esq., near New Haven, is a pleasing specimen of the simplest kind of Landscape Gardening, where graceful forms of trees, and a gently sloping surface of grass, are the principal features. The villa of Mr. Whitney near New Haven, is one of the most tastefully managed in the state. In Maine, the most remarkable seat, as respects landscape gardening and architecture, is that of Mr. Gardiner, of Gardiner.

The environs of Boston are more highly cultivated than those of any other city in North America. There are here whole rural neighborhoods of pretty cottages and villas, admirably cultivated, and, in many cases, tastefully laid out and planted. The character of even the finest of these places, is perhaps, somewhat suburban, as compared with those of the Hudson river, but we regard them as furnishing admirable hints for a class of residence likely to become more numerous than any other in this country — the tasteful suburban cottage. The owner of a small cottage residence may have almost every kind of beauty and enjoyment in his grounds that the largest estate will afford, so far as regards the interest of trees and plants, tasteful arrangement, recreation, and occupation. Indeed, we have little doubt that he, who directs personally the curve of every walk, selects and plants every shrub and tree, and

watches with solicitude every evidence of beauty and progress, succeeds in extracting from his tasteful grounds of half a dozen acres, a more intense degree of pleasure, than one who is only able to direct and enjoy, in a general sense, the arrangement of a vast estate.



FIG. 3. THE HOME OF MR. DOWNING AT NEWBURGH, N. Y.

*Belmont*, the seat of J. P. Cushing, Esq., is a residence of more note than any other near Boston; but this is, chiefly, on account of the extensive ranges of glass, the forced fruits, and the high culture of the gardens. A new and spacious mansion has recently been erected here, and the pleasure-grounds are agreeably varied with fine groups and masses of trees and shrubs on a pleasing lawn.

*The seat of Col. Perkins*, at Brookline, is one of the most interesting in this neighborhood. The very beautiful lawn here, abounds with exquisite trees, finely disposed; among them, some larches and Norway firs, with many other rare trees of uncommon beauty of form. At a short distance is the villa residence of Theodore Lyman, Esq., remarkable for the unusually fine avenue of Elms leading to the house, and for the beautiful architectural taste displayed in the dwelling itself. The seat of the Hon. John Lowell, at Roxbury, possesses also many interesting gardening features.\*

*Pine Bank*, the Perkins estate, on the border of Jamaica lake, is one of the most beautiful residences near Boston. The natural surface of the ground is exceedingly flowing and graceful, and it is varied by two or three singular little "dimples," or hollows, which add to its effect. The perfect order of the grounds; the beauty of the walks, sometimes skirting the smooth open lawn, enriched with rare plants

\* We Americans are proverbially impatient of delay, and a few years in prospect appear an endless futurity. So much is this feeling with many, that we verily believe there are hundreds of our country places, which owe their bareness and destitution of foliage to the idea, so common, that it requires "an age" for forest trees to "*grow up*." The middle-aged man hesitates about the good of planting what he imagines he shall never see arriving at maturity, and even many who are younger, conceive that it requires more than an ordinary lifetime to rear a fine wood of planted trees. About two years since, we had the pleasure of visiting the seat of the late Mr. Lowell, whom we found in a green old age, still enjoying, with the enthusiasm of youth, the pleasures of Horticulture and a country life. For the encouragement of those who are ever complaining of the tardy pace with which the growth of trees advances, we will here record that we accompanied Mr. L. through a belt of fine woods (skirting part of his residence), nearly half a mile in length, consisting of almost all our finer hardy trees, many of them apparently full grown, the whole of which had been planted by him when he was thirty-two years old. At that time, a solitary elm or two were almost the only trees upon his estate. We can hardly conceive a more rational source of pride or enjoyment, than to be able thus to walk, in the decline of years, beneath the shadow of umbrageous woods and groves, planted by our own hands, and whose growth has become almost identified with our own progress and existence. — A. J. D.

and shrubs, and then winding by the shadowy banks of the water; the soft and quiet character of the lake itself, — its margin richly fringed with trees, which conceal here and there a pretty cottage, its firm clean beach of gravel, and its water of crystal purity; all these features make this place a little gem of natural and artistical harmony, and beauty. Mr. Perkins has just rebuilt the house, in the style of a French *maison de campagne*; and Pine Bank is now adorned with a most complete residence in the latest continental taste, from the designs of M. Lémoulnier.\*

On the other side of the lake is the cottage of Thomas Lee, Esq. Enthusiastically fond of botany, and gardening in all its departments, Mr. Lee has here formed a residence of as much variety and interest as we ever saw in so moderate a compass — about 20 acres. It is, indeed, not only a most instructive place to the amateur of landscape gardening, but to the naturalist and lover of plants. Every shrub seems placed precisely in the soil and aspect it likes best, and native and foreign Rhododendrons, Kalmias, and other rare shrubs, are seen here in the finest condition. There is a great deal of variety in the surface here, and while the lawn-front of the house has a polished and graceful air, one or two other portions are quite picturesque. Near the entrance gate is an English oak, only fourteen years planted, now forty feet high.

The whole of this neighborhood of Brookline is a kind of landscape garden, and there is nothing in America, of the sort, so inexpressibly charming as the lanes which lead from one cottage, or villa, to another. No animals are allowed to run at large, and the open gates, with tempting vistas and glimpses under the pendent boughs, give it quite an Arcadian air of rural freedom and enjoyment. These lanes are clothed with a profusion of trees and wild shrubbery, often almost to the carriage tracks, and curve and wind about, in a manner quite bewildering to the stranger who attempts to thread them alone; and there are more hints

\* The beautiful grounds of Pine Bank are now a part of the Boston city park system. — F. A. W.



here for the lover of the picturesque in lanes, than we ever saw assembled together in so small a compass.

In the environs of New Bedford are many beautiful residences. Among these, we desire particularly to notice the residence of James Arnold, Esq. There is scarcely a small place in New England, where the pleasure-grounds are so full of variety, and in such perfect order and keeping, as at this charming spot; and its winding walks, open bits of lawn, shrubs and plants grouped on turf, shady bowers, and rustic seats, all most agreeably combined, render this a very interesting and instructive suburban seat.

In New Jersey, the grounds of the Count de Surveilliers, at Bordentown, were very extensive; and although the surface is mostly flat, it has been well varied by extensive plantations. At Mount Holly, about twenty miles from Camden, is Mr. Dunn's unique, semi-oriental cottage, with a considerable extent of pleasure ground, newly planted, after the designs of Mr. Notman.

About Philadelphia there are several very interesting seats on the banks of the Delaware and Schuylkill, and the district between these two rivers.

The country seat of George Sheaff, Esq., one of the most remarkable in Pennsylvania, in many respects, is twelve miles north of Philadelphia. The house is a large and respectable mansion of stone, surrounded by pleasure-grounds and plantations of fine evergreen and deciduous trees. The conspicuous ornament of the grounds, however, is a magnificent white oak, of enormous size, whose wide stretching branches, and grand head, give an air of dignity to the whole place. Among the sylvan features here, most interesting, are also the handsome evergreens, chiefly Balsam firs, some of which are now much higher than the mansion. These trees were planted by Mr. Sheaff twenty-two years ago, and were then so small, that they were brought by him from Philadelphia, at various times, in his carriage — a circumstance highly encouraging to despairing planters, when we reflect how comparatively slow growing is this tree. This whole estate is a striking example of science, skill, and

taste, applied to a country seat, and there are few in the Union, taken as a whole, superior to it.\*

Cottage residence of Mrs. Camac. This is one of the most agreeable places within a few miles of Philadelphia. The house is a picturesque cottage, in the rural gothic style, with very charming and appropriate pleasure-grounds, comprising many groups and masses of large and finely grown trees, interspersed with a handsome collection of shrubs and plants; the whole very tastefully arranged. The lawn is prettily varied in surface, and there is a conservatory attached to the house, in which the plants in pots are hidden in beds of soft green moss, and which, in its whole effect and management, is more tasteful and elegant than any plant house, connected with a dwelling, that we remember to have seen.

*Stenton*, near Germantown, four miles from Philadelphia, is a fine old place, with many picturesque features. The farm consists of 700 acres, almost without division fences — admirably managed — and remarkable for its grand old avenue of the hemlock spruce, 110 years old, leading to a family cemetery of much sylvan beauty. There is a large and excellent old mansion, with paved halls, built in 1731, which is preserved in its original condition. This place was the seat of the celebrated Logan, the friend of William Penn, and is now owned by his descendant, Albanus Logan.

The villa residence of Alexander Brown, Esq., is situated

\* The farm is 300 acres in extent, and, in the time of De Witt Clinton, was pronounced by him the model farm of the United States. At the present time we know nothing superior to it; and Capt. Barclay, in his agricultural tour, says it was the only instance of regular, scientific system of husbandry in the English manner, he saw in America. Indeed, the large and regular fields, filled with luxuriant crops, everywhere of an exact evenness of growth, and everywhere free from weeds of any sort; the perfect system of manuring and culture; the simple and complete fences; the fine stock; the very spacious barns, every season newly whitewashed internally and externally, paved with wood, and as clean as a gentleman's stable (with stalls to fatten 90 head of cattle); these, and the masterly way in which the whole is managed, both as regards culture and profit, render this estate one of no common interest in an agricultural, as well as ornamental point of view. — A. J. D.

on the Delaware, a few miles from Philadelphia. There is here a good deal of beauty, in the natural style, made up chiefly by lawn and forest trees. A pleasing drive through plantations of 25 years' growth, is one of the most interesting features — and there is much elegance and high keeping in the grounds.

Below Philadelphia, the lover of beautiful places will find a good deal to admire in the country seat of John R. Latimer, Esq., near Wilmington, which enjoys the reputation of being the finest in Delaware. The place has all the advantages of high keeping, richly stocked gardens and conservatories, and much natural beauty, heightened by judicious planting, arrangement, and culture.

At the south are many extensive country residences remarkable for trees of unusual grandeur and beauty, among which the live oak is very conspicuous; but they are, in general, wanting in that high keeping and care, which is so essential to the charm of a landscape garden.

Of smaller villa residences, suburban chiefly, there are great numbers, springing up almost by magic, in the borders of our towns and cities. Though the possessors of these can scarcely hope to introduce anything approaching to a landscape garden style, in laying out their limited grounds, still they may be greatly benefited by an acquaintance with the beauties and the pleasures of this species of rural embellishment. When we are once master of the principles, and aware of the capabilities of an art, we are able to infuse an expression of tasteful design, or an air of more correct elegance, even into the most humble works, and with very limited means.\*

While we shall endeavor, in the following pages, to give such a view of modern Landscape Gardening, as will enable the improver to proceed with his fascinating operations, in

\* This foregoing section has been preserved in the present edition mainly for historic reasons (which seems proper enough in a chapter entitled "Historical Sketches"), in order to show the background of Mr. Downing's work. To bring these sketches up to date on the same lines would be both impossible and impracticable in 1921. — F. A. W.

embellishing the country residence, in a practical mode, based upon what are now generally received as the correct principles of the art, we would desire the novice, after making himself acquainted with all that can be acquired from written works within his reach, to strengthen his taste and add to his knowledge, by a practical inspection of the best country seats among us. In an infant state of



FIG. 4. MAIN LAWN NEW JERSEY STATE HOSPITAL, TRENTON.  
DESIGNED BY A. J. DOWNING

society, in regard to the fine arts, much will be done in violation of good taste; but here, where nature has done so much for us, there is scarcely a large country residence in the Union, from which useful hints in Landscape Gardening may not be taken. And in nature, a group of trees, an accidental pond of water, or some equally simple object, may form a study more convincing to the mind of a true admirer of natural beauty, than the most carefully drawn plan, or the most elaborately written description.

## CHAPTER II

### BEAUTIES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE ART

"Here Nature in her unaffected dresse,  
Plaited with vallies and imboast with hills,  
Enchast with silver streams, and fringed with woods  
Sits lovely." —

CHAMBERLAYNE.

"Il est des soins plus doux, un art plus enchanteur.  
C'est peu de charmer l'œil, il faut parler au cœur.  
Avez-vous donc connu ces rapports invisibles,  
Des corps inanimés et des êtres sensibles?  
Avez-vous entendu des eaux, des prés, des bois,  
La muette éloquence et la secrète voix?  
Rendez-nous ces effets."

*Les Jardins, Book I.*

**B**EFORE we proceed to a detailed and more practical consideration of the subject, let us occupy ourselves for a moment with the consideration of the different results which are to be sought after, or, in other words, what kinds of beauty we may hope to produce by Landscape Gardening. To attempt the smallest work in any art, without knowing either the capacities of that art, or the schools, or modes, by which it has previously been characterized, is but to be groping about in a dim twilight, without the power of knowing, even should we be successful in our efforts, the real excellence of our production; or of judging its merit, comparatively, as a work of taste and imagination.

The beauties elicited by the ancient style of gardening were those of regularity, symmetry, and the display of labored art. These were attained in a merely mechanical manner, and usually involved little or no theory. The geometrical form and lines of the buildings were only extended and carried out in the garden. In the best classical

models, the art of the sculptor conferred dignity and elegance on the garden, by the fine forms of marble vases and statues; in the more intricate and labored specimens of the Dutch school, prevalent in England in the time of William IV, the results evince a fertility of odd conceits, rather than the exercise of taste or imagination. Indeed, as, to level ground naturally uneven, or to make an avenue, by planting rows of trees on each side of a broad walk, requires only the simplest perception of the beauty of mathematical forms, so, to lay out a garden in the geometric style, became little more than a formal routine, and it was only after the superior interest of a more natural manner was enforced by men of genius, that natural beauty of expression was recognized, and Landscape Gardening was raised to the rank of a fine art.\*

The ancient style of gardening may, however, be introduced with good effect in certain cases. In public squares and gardens, where display, grandeur of effect, and a highly artificial character are desirable, it appears to us the most suitable; and no less so in very small gardens, in which variety and irregularity are out of the question. Where a taste for imitating an old and quaint style of residence exists, the symmetrical and knotted garden would be a proper accompaniment; and pleached alleys, and sheared trees, would be admired, like old armor or furniture, as curious specimens of antique taste and custom.

The earliest professors of modern Landscape Gardening have generally agreed upon two variations, of which the art is capable — variations no less certainly distinct, on the one hand, than they are capable of intermingling and combining, on the other. These are the beautiful and the pic-

\* To most landscape architects of the present time, Mr. Downing's remarks on the geometrical style will seem slighting. They are much more liberal, however, than most of the discussions of that day. Early American thought, in particular, ran to partisan extremes in condemning the geometrical style, so that while Mr. Downing seems to have had little conception of its fundamental merits or practical possibilities, he had the good taste to spare his readers the usual venomous diatribes. — F. A. W.

Of the Beautiful  
and the Picturesque.

icturesque: or, to speak more definitely, the beauty characterized by simple and flowing forms, and <sup>the picturesque</sup> that expressed by striking, irregular, spirited forms.



FIG. 5. THE BEAUTIFUL AS ILLUSTRATED BY MR. DOWNING

The admirer of nature, as well as the lover of pictures and engravings, will at once call to mind examples of scenery distinctly expressive of each of these kinds of beauty. In nature, perhaps some gently undulating plain, covered with emerald turf, partially or entirely encompassed by rich, rolling outlines of forest canopy, — its wildest expanse here broken occasionally, by noble groups of round-headed trees, or there interspersed with single specimens whose trunks support heads of foliage flowing in outline, or drooping in masses to the very turf beneath them. In such a scene we often behold the azure of heaven, and its silvery clouds, as well as the deep verdure of the luxuriant and shadowy branches, reflected in the placid bosom of a sylvan lake; the shores of the latter swelling out, and receding, in gentle

curved lines; the banks, sometimes covered with soft turf sprinkled with flowers, and in other portions clothed with luxuriant masses of verdant shrubs. Here are all the elements of what is termed natural beauty, — or a landscape characterized by simple, easy, and flowing lines.

For an example of the opposite character, let us take a stroll to the nearest woody glen in your neighborhood — perhaps a romantic valley, half shut in on two or more sides by steep rocky banks, partially concealed and overhung by clustering vines, and tangled thickets of deep foliage. Against the sky outline breaks the wild and irregular form of some old, half decayed tree near by, or the horizontal and unique branches of the larch or the pine, with their strongly marked forms. Rough and irregular stems and trunks, rocks half covered with mosses and flowering plants, open glades of bright verdure opposed to dark masses of bold shadowy foliage, form prominent objects in the foreground. If water enlivens the scene, we shall hear the murmur of the noisy brook, or the cool dashing of the cascade, as it leaps over the rocky barrier. Let the stream turn the ancient and well-worn wheel of the old mill in the middle ground, and we shall have an illustration of the picturesque, not the less striking from its familiarity to every one.

To the lover of the fine arts, the name of Claude Lorraine cannot fail to suggest examples of beauty in some of its purest and most simple forms. In the best pictures of this master we see portrayed those graceful and flowing forms in trees, foreground, and buildings, which delight so much the lover of noble and chaste beauty, — compositions emanating from a harmonious soul, and inspired by a climate and a richness of nature and art seldom surpassed.

On the other hand, where shall we find all the elements of the picturesque more graphically combined than in the vigorous landscapes of Salvator Rosa! In those rugged scenes, even the lawless aspects of his favorite robbers and banditti are not more spirited, than the bold rocks and wild passes by which they are surrounded. And in the produc-



tions of his pencil we see the influence of a romantic and vigorous imagination, nursed amid scenes teeming with the grand as well as the picturesque — both of which he embodies in the most striking manner.



FIG. 6. THE PICTURESQUE AS ILLUSTRATED BY MR. DOWNING

In giving these illustrations of beautiful and of picturesque scenes, we have not intended them to be understood in the light of exact models for imitation in Landscape Gardening — only as striking examples of expression in natural scenery. Although in nature many landscapes partake in a certain degree of both these kinds of expression, yet it is no doubt true that the effect is more satisfactory, where either the one or the other character predominates. The accomplished amateur should be able to seize at once upon the characteristics of these two species of beauty in all scenery. To assist the reader in this kind of discrimination, we shall keep these expressions constantly in view, and we hope we shall be able fully to illustrate the difference in the expression of even single trees, in this respect. A

few strongly marked objects, either picturesque or simply beautiful, will often confer their character upon a whole landscape; as the destruction of a single group of bold rocks, covered with wood, may render a scene, once picturesque, completely insipid.

The early writers on the modern style were content with trees allowed to grow in their natural forms, and with an easy assemblage of sylvan scenery in the pleasure-grounds, which resembled the usual woodland features of nature. The effect of this method will always be interesting, and an agreeable impression will always be the result of following the simplest hints derived from the free and luxuriant forms of nature. No residence in the country can fail to be pleasing, whose features are natural groups of forest trees, smooth lawn, and hard gravel walks.

But this is scarcely Landscape Gardening in the true sense of the word, although apparently so understood by many writers. By Landscape Gardening, we understand not only an imitation, in the grounds of a country residence, of the agreeable forms of nature, but an expressive, harmonious, and refined imitation. In Landscape Gardening, we should aim to separate the accidental and extraneous in nature, and to preserve only the spirit, or essence. This subtle essence lies, we believe, in the expression more or less pervading every attractive portion of nature. And it is by eliciting, preserving, or heightening this expression, that we may give our landscape gardens a higher charm, than even the polish of art can bestow.

Now, the two most forcible and complete expressions to be found in that kind of natural scenery which may be reproduced in Landscape Gardening, are the *Beautiful* and the *Picturesque*. As we look upon these as quite distinct, and as success in practical embellishment must depend on our feeling and understanding these expressions beforehand, it is necessary that we should attach some definite meaning to terms which we shall be continually obliged to employ. This is, indeed, the more requisite, from the vague and conflicting opinions of most preceding writers on

this branch of the subject; some, like Repton, insisting that they are identical; and others, like Price, that they are widely different.

Gilpin defines Picturesque objects to be "those which please from some quality capable of being illustrated in painting."

Nothing can well be more vague than such a definition. We have already described the difference between the beautiful landscapes of Claude and the picturesque scenes painted by Salvator. No one can deny their being essentially distinct in character; and no one, we imagine, will deny that they both please from "some quality capable of being illustrated in painting." The beautiful female heads of Carlo Dolce are widely different from those of the picturesque peasant girls of Gerard Douw, yet both are favorite subjects with artists. A symmetrical American elm, with its wide head drooping with garlands of graceful foliage, is very different in expression from the wild and twisted larch or pine tree, which we find on the steep sides of a mountain; yet both are favorite subjects with the painter. It is clear, indeed, that there is a widely different idea hidden under these two distinct types, in material forms.

Beauty, in all natural objects, as we conceive, arises from their expression of those attributes of the Creator — infinity, unity, symmetry, proportion, etc. — which he has stamped more or less visibly on all his works; and a beautiful living form is one in which the individual is a harmonious and well balanced development of a fine type. Thus, taking the most perfect specimens of beauty in the human figure, we see in them symmetry, proportion, unity, and grace — the presence of everything that could add to the idea of perfected existence. In a beautiful tree, such as a fine American elm, we see also the most complete and perfect balance of all its parts, resulting from its growth under the most favorable influences. It realizes, then, perfectly, the finest form of a fine type or species of tree.

But all nature is not equally Beautiful. Both in living

things and in inorganized matter, we see on all sides evidences of nature struggling with opposing forces. Mountains are upheaved by convulsions, valleys are broken into fearful chasms. Certain forms of animal and vegetable life instead of manifesting themselves in those more complete and perfect forms of existence where the matter and spirit are almost in perfect harmony, appear to struggle for the full expression of their character with the material form, and to express it only with difficulty at last. What is achieved with harmony, grace, dignity, almost with apparent repose, by existences whose type is the Beautiful, is done only with violence and disturbed action by the former. This kind of manifestation in nature we call the Picturesque.

More concisely, the Beautiful is nature or art obeying the universal laws of perfect existence (i.e., Beauty), easily, freely, harmoniously, and without the display of power. The Picturesque is nature or art obeying the same laws rudely, violently, irregularly, and often displaying power only.

Hence we find all Beautiful forms characterized by curved and flowing lines — lines expressive of infinity, of grace, and willing obedience: and all Picturesque forms characterized by irregular and broken lines — lines expressive of violence, abrupt action, and partial disobedience, a struggling of the idea with the substance or the condition of its being. The Beautiful is an idea of beauty calmly and harmoniously expressed; the Picturesque an idea of beauty or power strongly and irregularly expressed. As an example of the Beautiful in other arts we refer to the Apôllo of the Vatican; as an example of the Picturesque, to the Laocoon or the Dying Gladiator. In nature we would place before the reader a finely formed elm or chestnut, whose well balanced head is supported on a trunk full of symmetry and dignity, and whose branches almost sweep the turf in their rich luxuriance; as a picturesque contrast, some pine or larch, whose gnarled roots grasp the rocky crag on which it grows, and whose wild and irregular branches tell of

the storm and tempest that it has so often struggled against.\*

In pictures, too, one often hears the Beautiful confounded with the Picturesque. Yet they are quite distinct; though in many subjects they may be found harmoniously combined. Some of Raphael's angels may be taken as perfect illustrations of the Beautiful. In their serene and heavenly countenances we see only that calm and pure existence of which perfect beauty is the outward type; on the other hand, Murillo's beggar boys are only picturesque. What we admire in them (beyond admirable execution) is not their rags or their mean apparel, but a certain irregular struggling of a better feeling within, against this outward poverty of nature and condition.

Architecture borrows, partly perhaps by association, the same expression. We find the Beautiful in the most symmetrical edifices, built in the finest proportions, and of the purest materials. It is, on the other hand, in some irregular castle formed for defence, some rude mill nearly as wild as the glen where it is placed, some thatched cottage, weather stained and moss covered, that we find the Picturesque. The Temple of Jupiter Olympus in all its perfect proportions was prized by the Greeks as a model of beauty; we, who see only a few columns and broken architraves standing with all their exquisite mouldings obliterated by the violence of time and the elements, find them Picturesque.

To return to a more practical view of the subject, we may remark, that though we consider the Beautiful and the Picturesque quite distinct, yet it by no means follows that they may not be combined in the same landscape. This is often seen in nature; and indeed there are few landscapes of large extent where they are not thus harmoniously combined.

\* This also explains why trees, though they retain for the most part their characteristic forms, vary somewhat in expression according to their situation. Thus the larch, though always picturesque, is far more so in mountain ridges where it is exposed to every blast, than in sheltered lawns where it only finds soft airs and sunshine. — A. J. D.



FIG. 7. MODERN AMERICAN HOME GARDEN

But it must be remembered, that while Landscape Gardening is an imitation of nature, yet it is rarely attempted on so large a scale as to be capable of the same extended harmony and variety of expression; and also, that in Landscape Gardening as in the other fine arts, we shall be more successful by directing our efforts towards the production of a leading character or expression, than by endeavoring to join and harmonize several.

Our own views on this subject are simply these. When a place is small, and only permits a single phase of natural expression, always endeavor to heighten or to make that single expression predominate; it should clearly either aim only at the Beautiful or the Picturesque.\*

When, on the contrary, an estate of large size comes within the scope of the Landscape Gardener, he is at liberty to give to each separate scene its most fitting character; he will thus, if he is a skilful artist, be able to create great variety both of beautiful and picturesque expression, and he will also be able to give a higher proof of his power, viz. by uniting all those scenes into one whole, by bringing them all into harmony. An artist who can do this has reached the ultimatum of his art.

Again and again has it been said, that Landscape Gardening and Painting are allied. In no one point does it appear to us that they are so, more than in this — that in proportion to the limited nature of the subject should simplicity and unity of expression be remembered. In some of the finest smaller compositions of Raphael, or some of the landscapes of Claude, so fully is this borne in mind, that every object, however small, seems to be instinct with the same expression; while in many of the great historical pictures, unity and harmony are wrought out of the most complex variety of expression.

\* This distinction between the Beautiful and the Picturesque was a favorite idea with Mr. Downing. Artists of the present hour pay small thought to it. To most Landscape Gardeners now it will seem to have comparatively little significance. The endeavor to define Beauty has never been very successful; and there is little practical outcome to the attempts to theorize along this line. — F. A. W.

We must not be supposed to find in nature only the Beautiful and the Picturesque. Grandeur and Sublimity are also expressions strongly marked in many of the noblest portions of natural landscape. But, except in very rare instances, they are wholly beyond the powers of the landscape gardener, at least in the comparatively limited scale of his operations in this country. All that he has to do, is to respect them where they exist in natural landscape which forms part of his work of art, and so treat the latter, as to make it accord with, or at least not violate, the higher and predominant expression of the whole.

There are, however, certain subordinate expressions which may be considered as qualities of the Beautiful, and which may originally so prevail in natural landscape, or be so elicited or created by art, as to give a distinct character to a small country residence, or portions of a large one. These are simplicity, dignity, grace, elegance, gaiety, chasteness, etc. It is not necessary that we should go into a labored explanation of these expressions. They are more or less familiar to all. A few fine trees, scattered and grouped over any surface of smooth lawn, will give a character of simple beauty; lofty trees of great age, hills covered with rich wood, an elevation commanding a wide country, stamp a site with dignity; trees of full and graceful habit or gently curving forms in the lawn, walks, and all other objects, will convey the idea of grace; as finely formed and somewhat tall trees of rare species, or a great abundance of bright climbers and gay flowering shrubs and plants, will confer characters of elegance and gaiety.\*

He who would create in his pleasure-grounds these more delicate shades of expression, must become a profound student both of nature and art; he must be able, by his own original powers, to seize the subtle essence, the half disclosed idea involved in the finest parts of nature, and to reproduce and develop it in his Landscape Garden.

\* A classic and contemporaneous discussion of these same ideas will be found in André's "*L'Art des Jardins*." — F. A. W.



Leaving such, however, to a broader range of study than a volume like this would afford, we may offer what, perhaps, will not be unacceptable to the novice — a more detailed sketch of the distinctive features of the Beautiful and the Picturesque, as these expressions should be embodied in Landscape Gardening.

THE BEAUTIFUL in Landscape Gardening is produced by outlines whose curves are flowing and gradual, surfaces of softness, and growth of richness and luxuriance. In the shape of the ground, it is evinced by easy undulations melting gradually into each other. In the form of trees, by smooth stems, full, round, or symmetrical heads of foliage, and luxuriant branches often drooping to the ground, — which is chiefly attained by planting and grouping, to allow free development of form; and by selecting trees of suitable character, as the elm, the ash, and the like. In walks and roads, by easy flowing curves, following natural shapes of the surface, with no sharp angles or abrupt turns. In water, by the smooth lake with curved margin, embellished with flowing outlines of trees, and full masses of flowering shrubs — or in the easy winding curves of a brook. The keeping of such a scene should be of the most polished kind, — grass mown into a softness like velvet, gravel walks scrupulously firm, dry, and clean; and the most perfect order and neatness should reign throughout. Among the trees and shrubs should be conspicuous the finest foreign sorts, distinguished by beauty of form, foliage, and blossom; and rich groups of shrubs and flowering plants should be arranged in the more dressed portions near the house. And finally, considering the house itself as a feature in the scene, it should properly belong to one of the classical modes; and the Italian, Tuscan, or Venetian forms are preferable, because these have both a polished and a domestic air, and readily admit of the graceful accompaniments of vases, urns, and other harmonious accessories. Or, if we are to have a plainer dwelling, it should be simple and symmetrical in its character, and its veranda festooned with masses of the finest climbers.

THE PICTURESQUE in Landscape Gardening aims at the production of outlines of a certain spirited irregularity, surfaces comparatively abrupt and broken, and growth of a somewhat wild and bold character. The shape of the ground sought after, has its occasional smoothness varied by sudden variations, and in parts runs into dingles, rocky groups, and broken banks. The trees should in many places be old and irregular, with rough stems and bark; and pines, larches, and other trees of striking, irregular growth, must appear in numbers sufficient to give character to the woody outlines. As, to produce the Beautiful, the trees are planted singly in open groups to allow full expansion, so for the Picturesque, the grouping takes every variety of form; almost every object should group with another; trees and shrubs are often planted closely together; and intricacy and variety — thickets — glades — and under-wood — as in wild nature, are indispensable. Walks and roads are more abrupt in their windings, turning off frequently at sudden angles where the form of the ground or some inviting object directs. In water, all the wildness of romantic spots in nature is to be imitated or preserved; and the lake or stream with bold shore and rocky, wood-fringed margin, or the cascade in the secluded dell, are the characteristic forms. The keeping of such a landscape will of course be less careful than in the graceful school. Firm gravel walks near the house, and a general air of neatness in that quarter, are indispensable to the fitness of the scene in all modes, and indeed properly evince the recognition of art in all Landscape Gardening. But the lawn may be less frequently mown, the edges of the walks less carefully trimmed, where the Picturesque prevails; while in portions more removed from the house, the walks may sometimes sink into a mere footpath without gravel, and the lawn change into the forest glade or meadow. The architecture which belongs to the picturesque landscape, is the Gothic mansion, the old English or the Swiss cottage, or some other striking forms, with bold projections, deep shadows, and irregular outlines. Rustic baskets, and similar ornaments,

may abound near the house, and in the more frequented parts of the place.

The recognition of art, as <sup>u</sup>London justly observes, is a first principle in Landscape Gardening, as in all other arts; and those of its professors have erred, who supposed that the object of this art is merely to produce a fac-simile of nature, that could not be distinguished from a wild scene. But we contend that this principle may be fully attained with either expression — the picturesque cottage being as well a work of art as the classic villa; its baskets, and seats of rustic work, indicating the hand of man as well as the marble vase and balustrade; and a walk, sometimes narrow and crooked, is as certainly recognized as man's work, as one always regular and flowing. Foreign trees of picturesque growth are as readily obtained as those of beautiful forms. The recognition of art is, therefore, always apparent in both modes. The evidences are indeed stronger and more multiplied in the careful polish of the Beautiful landscape,\* and hence many prefer this species of landscape, not, as it deserves to be preferred, because it displays the most beautiful and perfect ideas in its outlines, the forms of its trees, and all that enters into its composition, but chiefly because it also is marked by that careful polish, and that completeness, which imply the expenditure of money, which they so well know how to value.

If we declare that the Beautiful is the more perfect

\* The *beau ideal* in Landscape Gardening, as a fine art, appears to us to be embraced in the creation of scenery full of expression, as the beautiful or picturesque, the materials of which are, to a certain extent, different from those in wild nature, being composed of the floral and arboricultural riches of *all climates*, as far as possible; uniting in the same scene, a richness and a variety never to be found in any one portion of nature; — a scene characterized as a work of art, by the variety of the materials, as foreign trees, plants, etc., and by the polish and keeping of the grounds in the natural style, as distinctly as by the uniform and symmetrical arrangement in the ancient style. — A. J. D.

Into this definition of the natural style Mr. Downing condenses his whole philosophy. It is a curious and interesting definition. Those who would compare it with other views may consult Waugh's "The Natural Style in Landscape Gardening," Chapter I.

expression in landscape, we shall be called upon to explain why the Picturesque is so much more attractive to many minds. This, we conceive, is owing partly to the imperfection of our natures by which most of us sympathize more with that in which the struggle between spirit and matter is most apparent, than with that in which the union is harmonious and complete; and partly because from the comparative rarity of highly picturesque landscape, it affects us more forcibly when brought into contrast with our daily life. Artists, we imagine, find somewhat of the same pleasure in studying wild landscape, where the very rocks and trees seem to struggle with the elements for foothold, that they do in contemplating the phases of the passions and instincts of human and animal life. The manifestation of power is to many minds far more captivating than that of beauty.

All who enjoy the charms of Landscape Gardening, may perhaps be divided into three classes: ① those who have arrived only at certain primitive ideas of beauty which are found in regular forms and straight lines; ② those who in the Beautiful seek for the highest and most perfect development of the idea in the material form; ③ and those who in the Picturesque enjoy most a certain wild and incomplete harmony between the idea and the forms in which it is expressed.

As the two latter classes embrace the whole range of modern Landscape Gardening, we shall keep distinctly in view their two governing principles — the Beautiful and the Picturesque, in treating of the practice of the art.

There are always circumstances which must exert a controlling influence over amateurs, in this country, in choosing between the two. These are, fixed locality, expense, individual preference in the style of building, and many others which readily occur to all. The great variety of attractive sites in the older parts of the country, afford an abundance of opportunity for either taste. Within the last five years, we think the Picturesque is beginning to be preferred. It has, when a suitable locality offers, great advantages for us.

The raw materials of wood, water, and surface, by the margin of many of our rivers and brooks, are at once appropriated with so much effect, and so little art, in the picturesque mode; the annual tax on the purse too is so comparatively little, and the charm so great!

While, on one hand, the residences of a country of level plains usually allow only the beauty of simple and graceful forms; the larger demesne, with its swelling hills and noble masses of wood (may we not, prospectively, say the rolling prairie too?), should always, in the hands of the man of wealth, be made to display all the breadth, variety, and harmony of both the Beautiful and the Picturesque.\*

There is no surface of ground, however bare, which has not, naturally, more or less tendency to one or the other of these expressions. And the improver who detects the true character, and plants, builds, and embellishes, as he should, constantly aiming to elicit and strengthen it — will soon arrive at a far higher and more satisfactory result, than one who, in the common manner, works at random. The latter may succeed in producing pleasing grounds — he will undoubtedly add to the general beauty and tasteful appearance of the country, and we gladly accord him our thanks. But the improver who unites with pleasing forms an expression of sentiment, will affect not only the common eye, but much more powerfully, the imagination, and the refined and delicate taste.

But there are many persons with small cottage places, of little decided character, who have neither room, time nor income, to attempt the improvement of their grounds fully, after either of those two schools. How shall they render their places tasteful and agreeable, in the easiest manner? We answer, by attempting only the simple and the natural; and the unfailing way to secure this, is by employing as leading features only trees and grass. A soft verdant lawn, a few forest or ornamental trees well grouped,

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\* This reference to the rolling prairies looks like easy prophecy. In modern times several able men have attempted to define and to create a "prairie style" in Landscape Gardening. — F. A. W.

walks, and a few flowers, give universal pleasure; they contain in themselves, in fact, the basis of all our agreeable sensations in a landscape garden (natural beauty, and the recognition of art); and they are the most enduring sources of enjoyment in any place. There are no country seats in the United States so unsatisfactory and tasteless, as those in which, without any definite aim, everything is attempted; and a mixed jumble of discordant forms, materials, ornaments, and decorations, is assembled — a part in one style and a bit in another, without the least feeling of unity or congruity. These rural bedlams, full of all kinds of absurdities, without a leading character or expression of any sort, cost their owners a vast deal of trouble and money, without giving a tasteful mind a shadow of the beauty which it feels at the first glimpse of a neat cottage residence, with its simple, sylvan character of well kept lawn and trees. If the latter does not rank high in the scale of Landscape Gardening as an art, it embodies much of its essence as a source of enjoyment — the production of the Beautiful in country residences.

Besides the beauties of form and expression in the different modes of laying out grounds, there are certain universal and inherent beauties common to all styles, and, indeed, to every composition in the fine arts. Of these, we shall especially point out those growing out of the principles of unity, harmony, and variety.

Unity, or the production of a whole, is a leading principle of the highest importance, in every art of taste or design, without which no satisfactory result can be realized. This arises from the fact, that the mind can only attend, with pleasure and satisfaction, to one object, or one composite sensation, at the same time. If two distinct objects, or classes of objects, present themselves at once to us, we can only attend satisfactorily to one, by withdrawing our attention for the time from the other. Hence the necessity of a reference to this leading principle of unity.

To illustrate the subject, let us suppose a building, partially built of wood, with square windows, and the remain-

der of brick or stone, with long and narrow windows. However well such a building may be constructed, or however nicely the different proportions of the edifice may be adjusted, it is evident it can never form a satisfactory whole. The mind can only account for such an absurdity, by supposing it to have been built by two individuals, or at two different times, as there is nothing indicating unity of mind in its composition.

In Landscape Gardening, violations of the principle of unity are often to be met with, and they are always indicative of the absence of correct taste in art. Looking upon a landscape from the windows of a villa residence, we sometimes see a considerable portion of the view embraced by the eye, laid out in natural groups of trees and shrubs, and upon one side, or perhaps in the middle of the same scene, a formal avenue leading directly up to the house. Such a view can never appear a satisfactory whole, because we experience a confusion of sensations in contemplating it. There is an evident incongruity in bringing two modes of arranging plantations, so totally different, under the eye at one moment, which distracts, rather than pleases the mind. In this example, the avenue, taken by itself, may be a beautiful object, and the groups and connected masses may, in themselves, be elegant; yet if the two portions are seen together, they will not form a whole, because they cannot make a composite idea. For the same reason, there is something displeasing in the introduction of fruit trees among elegant ornamental trees on a lawn, or even in assembling together, in the same beds, flowering plants and culinary vegetables — one class of vegetation suggesting the useful and homely alone to the mind, and the other, avowedly, only the ornamental.

In the arrangement of a large extent of surface, where a great many objects are necessarily presented to the eye at once, the principle of unity will suggest that there should be some grand or leading features to which the others should be merely subordinate. Thus, in grouping trees, there should be some large and striking masses to which

the others appear to belong, however distant, instead of scattered groups, all of the same size. Even in arranging walks, a whole will more readily be recognized, if there are one or two of large size, with which the others appear connected as branches, than if all are equal in breadth, and present the same appearance to the eye in passing.

In all works of art which command universal admiration we discover unity of conception and composition, with unity of taste and execution. To assemble in a single composition forms which are discordant, and portions dissimilar in plan, can only afford pleasure for a short time to tasteless minds, or those fond of trifling and puerile conceits. The production of an accordant whole is, on the contrary, capable of affording the most permanent enjoyment to educated minds, everywhere, and at all periods of time.

After unity, the principle of variety is worthy of consideration, as a fertile source of beauty in Landscape Gardening. Variety must be considered as belonging more to the details than to the production of a whole, and it may be attained by disposing trees and shrubs in numerous different ways; and by the introduction of a great number of different species of vegetation, or kinds of walks, ornamental objects, buildings, and seats. By producing intricacy, it creates in scenery a thousand points of interest, and elicits new beauties, through different arrangements and combinations of forms and colors, light and shades. In pleasure-grounds, while the whole should exhibit a general plan, the different scenes presented to the eye, one after the other, should possess sufficient variety in the detail to keep alive the interest of the spectator, and awaken further curiosity.

Harmony may be considered the principle presiding over variety, and preventing it from becoming discordant. It, indeed, always supposes contrasts, but neither so strong nor so frequent as to produce discord; and variety, but not so great as to destroy a leading expression. In plantations, we seek it in a combination of qualities, opposite in some respects, as in the color of the foliage, and similar in others more important, as the form. In embellishments, by a



Harmony introduces contrast & variety  
subordinated to unity.

great variety of objects of interest, as sculptured vases, sun dials, or rustic seats, baskets, and arbors, of different forms, but all in accordance, or keeping with the spirit of the scene.

To illustrate the three principles, with reference to Landscape Gardening, we may remark, that, if unity only were consulted, a scene might be planted with but one kind of tree, the effect of which would be sameness; on the other hand, variety might be carried so far as to have every tree of a different kind, which would produce a confused effect. Harmony, however, introduces contrast and variety, but keeps them subordinate to unity, and to the leading expression; and is, thus, the highest principle of the three.

In this brief abstract of the nature of imitation in Landscape Gardening and the kinds of beauty which it is possible to produce by means of the art, we have endeavored to elucidate its leading principles, clearly, to the reader. These grand principles we shall here succinctly recapitulate, premising that a familiarity with them is of the very first importance in the successful practice of this elegant art, viz.:

*The imitation of the beauty of expression, derived from a refined perception of the sentiment of nature: The recognition of art, founded on the immutability of the true, as well as the beautiful: and the production of unity, harmony, and variety, in order to render complete and continuous, our enjoyment of any artistical work.*

Neither the professional Landscape Gardener, nor the amateur, can hope for much success in realizing the nobler effects of the art, unless he first make himself master of the natural character or prevailing expression of the place to be improved. In this nice perception, at a glance, of the natural expression, as well as the capabilities of a residence, lies the secret of the superior results produced even by the improver, who, to use the words of Horace Walpole, "is proud of no other art than that of softening nature's harshness, and copying her graceful touch." When we discover the picturesque indicated in the grounds of the residence to be treated, let us take advantage of it; and while all harsh-

no more!

ness incompatible with scenery near the house is removed, the original expression may in most cases be heightened, in all rendered more elegant and appropriate, without lowering it in force or spirit. In like manner good taste will direct us to embellish scenery expressive of the beautiful, by the addition of forms, whether in trees, buildings, or other objects, harmonious in character, as well as in color and outline.

### CHAPTER III

#### ON WOOD AND PLANTATIONS

"He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,  
Surprises, varies, and conceals the bounds.  
Calls in the country, catches opening glades,  
Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;  
Now breaks, or now directs the intending lines;  
Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs."

POPE.

**A**MONG all the materials at our disposal for the embellishment of country residences, none are at once so highly ornamental, so indispensable, and so easily managed, as *trees*, or *wood*. We introduce them in every part of the landscape, — in the foreground as well as in the distance, on the tops of the hills and in the depths of the valleys. They are, indeed, like the drapery which covers a somewhat ungainly figure, and while it conceals its defects, communicates to it new interest and expression.

A tree, undoubtedly, is one of the most beautiful objects in nature. Airy and delicate in its youth, luxuriant and majestic in its prime, venerable and picturesque in its old age, it constitutes in its various forms, sizes, and developments the greatest charm and beauty of the earth in all countries. The most varied outline of surface, the finest combination of picturesque materials; the stateliest country house would be comparatively tame and spiritless, without the inimitable accompaniment of foliage. Let those who have passed their whole lives in a richly wooded country, — whose daily visions are deep leafy glens, forest clad hills and plains luxuriantly shaded, — transport themselves for a moment to the desert, where but a few stunted bushes raise their heads above the earth, or those wild steppes where the eye wanders in vain for some "leafy garniture" —

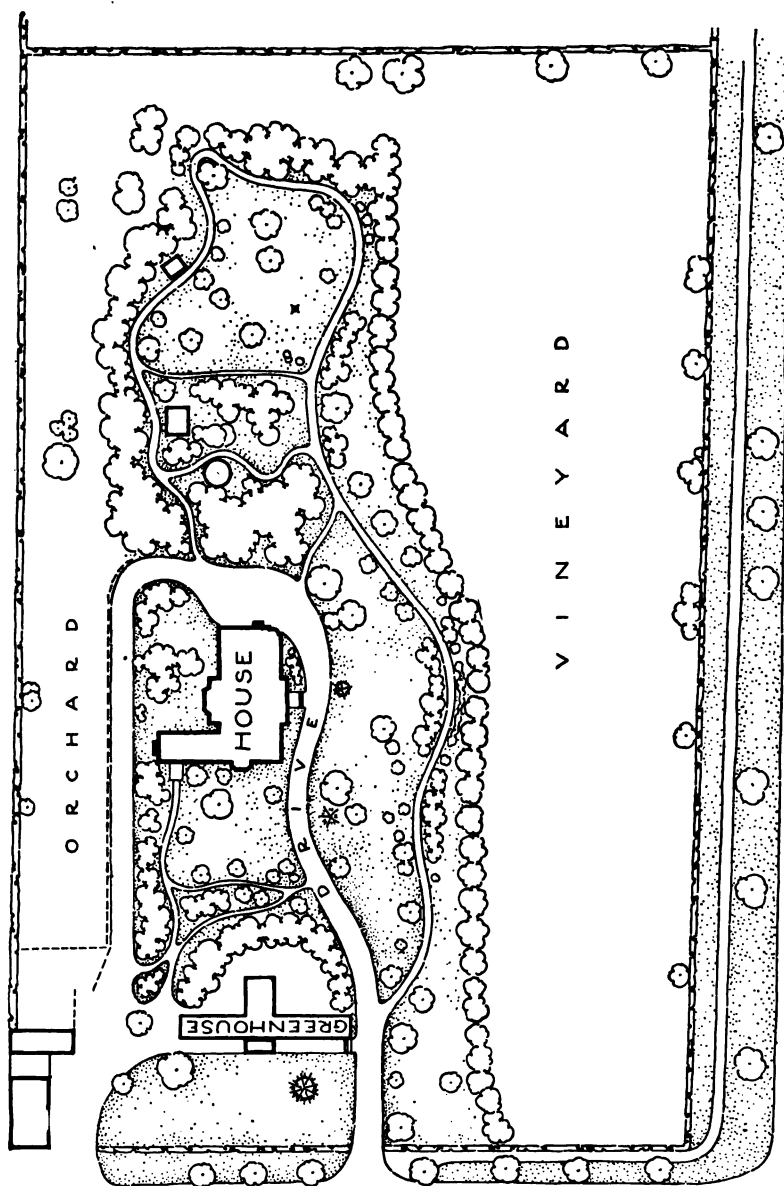


FIG. 8. PLAN OF MR. DOWNING'S HOME GROUNDS, NEWBURGH, N. Y.

where the sun strikes down with parching heat, or the wind sweeps over with unbroken fury, and they may, perhaps, estimate, by contrast, their beauty and value.

We are not now to enumerate the great usefulness of trees, — their value in the construction of our habitations, our navies, the various implements of labor, — in short, the thousand associations which they suggest as ministering to our daily wants; but let us imagine the loveliest scene, the wildest landscape, or the most enchanting valley, despoiled of trees, and we shall find nature shorn of her fair proportions, and the character and expression of these favorite spots almost entirely destroyed.

Wood, in its many shapes, is then one of the greatest sources of interest and character in landscapes. Variety, which we need scarcely allude to as a fertile source of beauty, is created in a wonderful degree by a natural arrangement of trees. To a pile of buildings, or even of ruins, to a group of rocks or animals, they communicate new life and spirit by their irregular outlines, which, by partially concealing some portions, and throwing others into stronger light, contribute greatly to produce intricacy and variety, and confer an expression, which, without these latter qualities, might in a great measure be wanting. By shutting out some parts, and inclosing others, they divide the extent embraced by the eye into a hundred different landscapes, instead of one tame scene bounded by the horizon.

The different seasons of the year, too, are inseparably connected in our minds with the effects produced by them on woodland scenery. Spring is joyous and enlivening to us, as nature then puts on her fresh livery of green, and the trees bud and blossom with a renewed beauty, that speaks with a mute and gentle eloquence to the heart. In summer they offer us a grateful shelter under their umbrageous arms and leafy branches, and whisper unwritten music to the passing breeze. In autumn we feel a melancholy thoughtfulness as

“We stand among the fallen leaves,”

and gaze upon their dying glories. And in winter we see

in them the silent rest of nature, and behold in their leafless spray, and seemingly dead limbs, an annual type of that deeper mystery — the deathless sleep of all being.

By the judicious employment of trees in the embellishment of a country residence, we may effect the greatest alterations and improvements within the scope of Landscape Gardening. Buildings which are tame, insipid, or even mean, in appearance, may be made interesting, and often picturesque, by a proper disposition of trees. Edifices, or parts of them that are unsightly, or which it is desirable partly or wholly to conceal, can readily be hidden or improved by wood; and walks and roads, which otherwise would be but simple ways of approach from one point to another, are, by an elegant arrangement of trees on their margins, or adjacent to them, made the most interesting and pleasing portions of the residence.

In geometric gardening, trees disposed in formal lines, exhibit as strongly art or design in the contriver, as regular architectural edifices; while, in a more elevated and enlightened taste, we are able to dispose them in our pleasure-grounds and parks, around our houses, in all the variety of groups, masses, thicket, and single trees, in such a manner as to rival the most beautiful scenery of general nature; producing a portion of landscape which unites with all the comforts and conveniences of rural habitation, the superior charm of refined arrangement, and natural beauty of expression.

If it were necessary to present any other inducement to the country gentleman to form plantations of trees, than the great beauty and value which they add to his estate, we might find it in the pleasure which all derive from their cultivation. Unlike the pleasure arising from the gratification of our taste in architecture, or any other of the arts whose productions are offered to us perfect and complete, the satisfaction arising from planting and rearing trees is never weakened. "We look," says a writer, "upon our trees as our offspring; and nothing of inanimate nature can be more gratifying than to see them grow and prosper

under our care and attention, — nothing more interesting than to examine their progress, and mark their several peculiarities. In their progress from plants to trees, they every year unfold new and characteristic marks of their ultimate beauty, which not only compensate for past cares and troubles, but like the returns of gratitude, raise a most delightful train of sensations in the mind, so innocent and rational, that they may justly rank with the most exquisite of human enjoyments.”

“Happy is he, who in a country life  
Shuns more perplexing toil and jarring strife;  
Who lives upon the natal soil he loves,  
And sits beneath his old ancestral groves.”

To this, let us add the complacent feelings with which a man in old age may look around him and behold these leafy monarchs, planted by his boyish hands and nurtured by him in his youthful years, which have grown aged and venerable along with him;

“A wood coeval with himself he sees,  
And loves his own contemporary trees.”

*Plantations in the Ancient Style.* In the arrangement and culture of trees and plants in the ancient style of Landscape Gardening, we discover the evidences of the formal taste, — abounding with every possible variety of quaint conceits, and rife with whimsical expedients, so much in fashion during the days of Henry and Elizabeth, and until the eighteenth century in England, and which is still the reigning mode in Holland, and parts of France. In these gardens, nature was tamed and subdued, or as some critics will have it, tortured into every shape which the ingenuity of the gardener could suggest; and such kinds of vegetation as bore the shears most patiently, and when carefully trimmed, assumed gradually the appearance of verdant statues, pyramids, crowing cocks, and rampant lions, were the especial favorites of the gardeners of the old school.\*

\* These whimsies do not belong to the formal style and are no more appropriate to it than to the natural style. The mistake of imputing them to the formal style, however, has been common, especially in earlier years. — F. A. W.

It has been remarked, that the geometric style would always be preferred in a new country, or in any country where the amount of land under cultivation is much less than that covered with natural woods and forests; as the inhabitants being surrounded by scenery abounding with natural beauty, would always incline to lay out their gardens and pleasure-grounds in regular forms, because the distinct exhibition of art would give more pleasure by contrast, than the elegant imitation of beautiful nature. That this is true as regards the mass of uncultivated minds, we do not deny. But at the same time we affirm that it evinces a meagre taste, and a lower state of the art, or a lower perception of beauty in the individual who employs the geometrical style in such cases. A person, whose place is surrounded by inimitably grand or sublime scenery, would undoubtedly fail to excite our admiration, by attempting a fac-simile imitation of such scenery on the small scale of a park or garden; but he is not, therefore, obliged to resort to right-lined plantations and regular grass plots, to produce something which shall be at once sufficiently different to attract notice, and so beautiful as to command admiration. All that it would be requisite for him to do in such a case, would be to employ rare and foreign ornamental trees, as for example, the horse-chestnut and the linden, in situations where the maple and the sycamore are the principal trees, — elegant flowering shrubs and beautiful creepers, instead of sumacs and hazels, — and to have his place kept in high and polished order, instead of the tangled wildness of general nature.

On the contrary, were a person to desire a residence newly laid out and planted, in a district where all around is in a high state of polished cultivation, as in the suburbs of a city, a species of pleasure would result from the imitation of scenery of a more spirited, natural character, as the picturesque, in his grounds. His plantations are made in irregular groups, composed chiefly of picturesque trees, as the larch, etc. — his walks would lead through varied scenes, sometimes bordered with groups of rocks overrun with



flowering creepers and vines; sometimes with thickets or little copses of shrubs and flowering plants; sometimes through wild and comparatively neglected portions; the whole interspersed with open glades of turf.

In the majority of instances in the United States, the modern style of Landscape Gardening, wherever it is appreciated, will, in practice, consist in arranging a demesne of from five to some hundred acres, — or rather that portion of it, say one half, one third, etc., devoted to lawn and pleasure-ground, pasture, etc. — so as to exhibit groups of forest and ornamental trees and shrubs, surrounding the dwelling of the proprietor, and extending for a greater or less distance, especially towards the place of entrance from the public highway. Near the house, good taste will dictate the assemblage of groups and masses of the rarer or more beautiful trees and shrubs; commoner native forest trees occupying the more distant portions of the grounds.\*

*Plantations in the Modern Style.* In the modern style of Landscape Gardening, it is our aim, in plantations, to produce not only what is called natural beauty, but even higher and more striking beauty of expression, and of individual forms, than we see in nature; to create variety and

\* Although we love planting, and avow that there are few greater pleasures than to see a darling tree, of one's own placing, every year stretching wider its feathery head of foliage, and covering with a darker shadow the soft turf beneath it, still, we will not let the ardent and inexperienced hunter after a location for a country residence, pass without a word of advice. This is, *always to make considerable sacrifice to get a place with some existing wood, or a few ready grown trees upon it*; especially near the site for the house. It is better to yield a little in the extent of prospect, or in the direct proximity to a certain locality, than to pitch your tent in a plain, — desert-like in its bareness — on which your leafy sensibilities must suffer for half a dozen years at least, before you can hope for any solace. It is doubtful whether there is not almost as much interest in studying from one's window the curious ramifications, the variety of form, and the entire harmony, to be found in a fine old tree, as in gazing from a site where we have no interruption to a panorama of the whole horizon; and we have generally found that no planters have so little courage and faith, as those who have commenced without the smallest group of large trees, as a nucleus for their plantations. — A. J. D.

intricacy in the grounds of a residence by various modes of arrangement; to give a highly elegant or polished air to places by introducing rare and foreign species; and to conceal all defects of surface, disagreeable views, unsightly buildings, or other offensive objects.

As uniformity, and grandeur of single effects, were the aim of the old style of arrangement, so variety and harmony of the whole are the results for which we labor in the modern landscape. And as the *avenue*, or the straight line, is the leading form in the geometric arrangement of plantations, so let us enforce it upon our readers, the *group* is equally the key-note of the modern style. The smallest place, having only three trees, may have these pleasingly connected in a group; and the largest and finest park — the Blenheim or Chatsworth, of seven miles square, is only composed of a succession of groups, becoming masses, thickets, woods. If a demesne with the most beautiful surface and views has been for some time stiffly and awkwardly planted, it is exceedingly difficult to give it a natural and agreeable air; while many a tame level, with scarcely a glimpse of distance, has been rendered lovely by its charming groups of trees. How necessary, therefore, is it, in the very outset, that the novice, before he begins to plant, should know how to arrange a tasteful group!

Nothing, at first thought, would appear easier than to arrange a few trees in the form of a natural and beautiful group, — and nothing really is easier to the practised hand. Yet experience has taught us that the generality of persons, in commencing their first essays in ornamental planting, almost invariably crowd their trees into a close, regular *clump*, which has a most formal and unsightly appearance, as different as possible from the easy, flowing outline of the group.

“Natural groups are full of openings and hollows, of trees advancing before, or retiring behind each other; all productive of intricacy, of variety, of deep shadows and brilliant lights.”

The chief care, then, which is necessary in the formation

of groups, is, not to place them in any regular or artificial manner, — as one at each corner of a triangle, square, octagon, or other many-sided figure; but so to dispose them, as that the whole may exhibit the variety, connection, and intricacy seen in nature. “The greatest beauty of a group of trees,” says Loudon, “as far as respects their stems, is in the varied direction these take as they grow into trees; but as that is, for all practical purposes, beyond the influence of art, all we can do, is to vary as much as possible the ground plan of groups, or the relative positions which the stems have to each other where they spring from the earth. This is considerable, even where a very few trees are used, of which any person may convince himself by placing a few dots on paper.

In the composition of larger masses, similar rules must be observed as in the smaller groups, in order to prevent them from growing up in heavy, clumpish forms. The outline must be flowing, here projecting out into the grass, there receding back into the plantation, in order to take off all appearance of stiffness and regularity. Trees of medium and smaller size should be so interspersed with those of larger growth, as to break up all formal sweeps in the line produced by the tops of their summits, and occasionally, low trees should be planted on the outer edge of the mass, to connect it with the humble verdure of the surrounding sward.

In many parts of the union,\* where new residences are being formed, or where old ones are to be improved, the grounds will often be found, partially, or to a considerable extent, clothed with belts or masses of wood, either previously planted, or preserved from the woodman’s axe. How easily we may turn these to advantage in the natural style of Landscape Gardening; and by judicious trimming when too thick, or additions when too much scattered, elicit often the happiest effects, in a magical manner!

\* It is an interesting side-light on politics and history that we have ceased altogether, in these times of world politics, to speak of “the Union,” meaning the United States. This was once the most natural and popular phrase. — F. A. W.

Where there are large masses of wood to regulate and arrange, much skill, taste, and judgment are requisite to enable the proprietors to preserve only what is really beautiful and picturesque, and to remove all that is superfluous. Most of our native woods, too, have grown so closely, and the trees are consequently so much drawn up, that should the improver thin out any portion, at once, to single trees, he will be greatly disappointed if he expects them to stand long; for the first severe autumnal gale will almost certainly prostrate them. The only method, therefore, is to allow them to remain in groups of considerable size at first, and to thin them out as is finally desired, when they have made stronger roots and become more inured to the influence of the sun and air.

But to return to grouping; what we have already endeavored to render familiar to the reader, may be called grouping in its simple meaning—for general effect, and with an eye only to the natural beauty of pleasing forms. Let us now explain, as concisely as we may, the mode of grouping in the two schools of Landscape Gardening heretofore defined, that is to say, grouping and planting for Beautiful effect, and for Picturesque effect; as we wish it understood that these two different expressions, in artificial landscape, are always to a certain extent under our control.

*Planting and Grouping to produce the Beautiful.* The elementary features of this expression our readers will remember to be fulness and softness of outline, and perfectly luxuriant development. To insure these in plantations, we must commence by choosing mainly trees of graceful habit and flowing outlines; and of this class of trees, hereafter more fully illustrated, the American elm and the maple may be taken as the type. Next, in disposing them, they must usually be planted rather distant in the groups, and often singly. We do not mean by this, that close groups may not occasionally be formed, but there should be a predominance of trees grouped at such a distance from each other as to allow a full development of the branches on every side. Or, when a close group is planted, the trees compos-

ing it should be usually of the same or a similar kind, in order that they may grow up together and form one finely rounded head. Rich creepers and blossoming vines, that grow in fine luxuriant wreaths and masses, are fit accompaniments to occasional groups in this manner. Fig. 9 represents a plan of trees grouped along a road or walk, so as to develop the Beautiful.\*

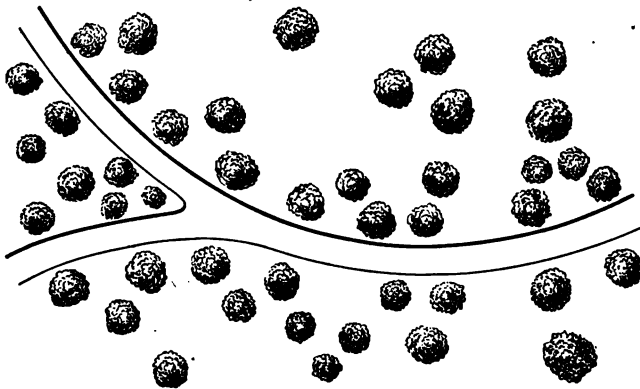


FIG. 9. TREES GROUPED TO PRODUCE THE BEAUTIFUL

It is proper that we should here remark, that a distinct species of after treatment is required for the two modes. Trees, or groups, where the Beautiful is aimed at, should be pruned with great care, and indeed scarcely at all, except to remedy disease, or to correct a bad form. Above all, the full luxuriance and development of the tree should be encouraged by good soil, and repeated manurings when necessary; and that most expressively elegant fall and droop of the branches, which so completely denotes the Beautiful in trees, should never be warred against by any trimming of the lower branches, which must also be care-

\* The original figure is here reproduced, from which it may be remarked that the grouping is both too scattered and too crowded to meet the modern taste. The best practitioners of the present day would make closer masses contrasting with wider open spaces. — F. A. W.

fully preserved against cattle, whose *browsing line* would soon efface this most beautiful disposition in some of our fine lawn trees. Clean, smooth stems, fresh and tender bark, and a softly rounded pyramidal or drooping head, are the characteristics of a Beautiful tree. We need not add that gently sloping ground, or surfaces rolling in easy undulations, should accompany such plantations.

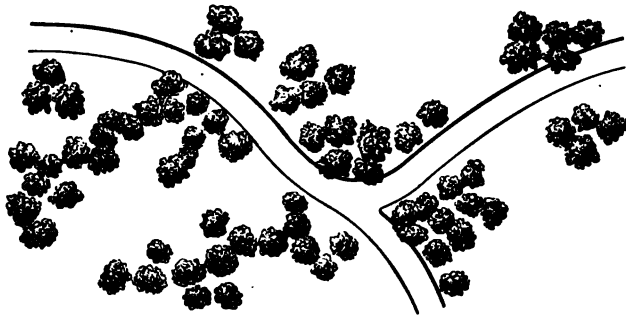


FIG. 10. TREES GROUPED TO PRODUCE THE PICTURESQUE

*Planting and Grouping to produce the Picturesque.* All trees are admissible in a picturesque place, but a predominance must be used by the planter of what are truly called picturesque trees, of which the larch and fir tribe and some species of oak, may be taken as examples. In Picturesque plantations everything depends on intricacy and irregularity, and grouping, therefore, must often be done in the most irregular manner — rarely, if ever, with single specimens, as every object should seem to connect itself with something else; but most frequently there should be irregular groups, occasionally running into thickets, and always more or less touching each other; trusting to after time for any thinning, should it be necessary. Fig. 10 may, as compared with Fig. 9, give an idea of picturesque grouping.

There should be more of the wildness of the finest and most forcible portions of natural woods or forests, in the

disposition of the trees; sometimes planting them closely, even two or three in the same hole, at others more loose and scattered. These will grow up into wilder and more striking forms, the barks will be deeply furrowed and rough, the limbs twisted and irregular, and the forms and outlines distinctly varied. They should often be intermixed with smaller undergrowth of a similar character, as the hazel, hawthorn, etc., and formed into such picturesque and striking groups, as painters love to study and introduce into their pictures. Sturdy and bright vines, or such as are themselves picturesque in their festoons and hangings, should be allowed to clamber over occasional trees in a negligent manner; and the surface and grass, in parts of the scene not immediately in the neighborhood of the mansion, may be kept short by the cropping of animals, or allowed to grow in a more careless and loose state, like that of tangled dells and natural woods.

There will be the same open glades in picturesque as in beautiful plantations; but these openings, in the former, will be bounded by groups and thickets of every form, and of different degrees of intricacy, while in the latter the eye will repose on softly rounded masses of foliage, or single open groups of trees, with finely balanced and graceful heads and branches.

In order to know how a plantation in the Picturesque mode should be treated, after it is established, we should reflect a moment on what constitutes picturesqueness in any tree. This will be found to consist either in a certain natural roughness of bark, or wildness of form and outline, or in some accidental curve of a branch of striking manner of growth, or perhaps of both these conjoined. A broken or crooked limb, a leaning trunk, or several stems springing from the same base, are frequently peculiarities that at once stamp a tree as picturesque. Hence, it is easy to see that the excessive care of the cultivator of trees in the graceful school to obtain the smoothest trunks, and the most sweeping, perfect, and luxuriant heads of foliage, is quite the opposite of what is the picturesque arboriculturist's ambi-

tion. He desires to encourage a certain wildness of growth, and allows his trees to spring up occasionally in thickets to assist this effect; he delights in occasional irregularity of stem and outline, and he therefore suffers his trees here and there to crowd each other; he admires a twisted limb or a moss covered branch, and in pruning he therefore is careful to leave precisely what it would be the aim of the other to remove; and his pruning, where it is at all necessary, is directed rather towards increasing the naturally striking and peculiar habit of the picturesque tree, than assisting it in developing a form of unusual refinement and symmetry. From these remarks we think the amateur will easily divine that planting, grouping, and culture to produce the Beautiful, require a much less artistic eye (though much more care and attention) than performing the same operations to elicit the Picturesque. The charm of a refined and polished landscape garden, as we usually see it in the Beautiful grounds with all the richness and beauty developed by high culture, arises from our admiration of the highest perfection, the greatest beauty of form, to which every object can be brought; and, in trees, a judicious selection, with high cultivation, will always produce this effect.

But in the Picturesque landscape garden there is visible a piquancy of effect, certain bold and striking growths and combinations, which we feel at once, if we know them to be the result of art, to be the production of a peculiar species of attention — not merely good, or even refined ornamental gardening. In short, no one can be a picturesque improver (if he has to begin with young plantations) who is not himself something of an artist — who has not studied nature with an artistical eye — and who is not capable of imitating, eliciting, or heightening, in his plantations or other portions of his residence, the picturesque in its many variations. And we may add here, that efficient and charming as is the assistance which all ornamental planters will derive from the study of the best landscape engravings and pictures of distinguished artists, they are indispensably necessary to the Picturesque improver. In these he will often



find embodied the choicest and most captivating studies from picturesque nature; and will see at a glance the effect of certain combinations of trees, which he might otherwise puzzle himself a dozen years to know how to produce.

After all, as the Picturesque improver here will most generally be found to be one who chooses a comparatively wild and wooded place, we may safely say that, if he has the true feeling for his work, he will always find it vastly easier than those who strive after the Beautiful; as the majority of the latter may be said to begin nearly anew — choosing places not for wildness and intricacy of wood, but for openness and the smiling, sunny undulating plain, where they must of course to a good extent plant anew.

After becoming well acquainted with grouping, we should bring ourselves to regard those principles which govern our improvements as a whole. We therefore must call the attention of the improver to the two following principles, which are to be constantly in view: *the production of a whole, and the proper connection of the parts.*

Any person who will take the trouble to reflect for a moment on the great diversity of surface, change of position, aspects, views, etc., in different country residences, will at once perceive how difficult, or, indeed, how impossible it is, to lay down any fixed or exact rules for arranging plantations in the modern style. What would be precisely adapted to a hilly rolling park, would often be found entirely unfit for adoption in a smooth, level surface, and the contrary. Indeed, the chief beauty of the modern style is the variety produced by following a few leading principles and applying them to different and varied localities; unlike the geometric style, which proceeded to level, and arrange, and erect its avenues and squares, alike in every situation, with all the precision and certainty of mathematical demonstration.

In all grounds to be laid out, however, which are of a lawn or park-like extent, and call for the exercise of judgment and taste, the mansion or dwelling-house, being itself the chief or leading object in the scene, should form, as it

were, the central point, to which it should be the object of the planter to give importance. In order to do this effectually, the large masses or groups of wood should cluster round, or form the background to the main edifice; and where the offices or out-buildings approach the same neighborhood, they also should be embraced. We do not mean by this to convey the idea, that a thick wood should be planted around and in the close neighborhood of the mansion or villa, so as to impede the free circulation of air; but its appearance and advantages may be easily produced by comparatively loose plantation of groups well connected by intermediate trees, so as to give all the effect of a large mass. The front, and at least that side nearest the approach road, will be left open, or nearly so; while the plantations in the background will give dignity and importance to the house, and at the same time effectually screen the approach to the farm buildings, and other objects which require to be kept out of view; and here both for the purposes of shelter and richness of effect, a good proportion of evergreens should be introduced.

From this principal mass, the plantations must break off in groups of greater or less size, corresponding to the extent covered by it; if large, they will diverge into masses of considerable magnitude, if of moderate size, in groups made up of a number of trees. In the lawn front of the house, appropriate places will be found for a number of the most elegant single trees, or small groups of trees, remarkable for the beauty of their forms, foliage, or blossoms. Care must be taken, however, in disposing these, as well as many of the groups, that they are not placed so as, at some future time, to interrupt or disturb the finest points of prospect.

In more distant parts of the plantations will also appear masses of considerable extent, perhaps upon the boundary line, perhaps in particular situations on the sides, or in the interior of the whole; and the various groups which are distributed between should be so managed as, though in most cases distinct, yet to appear to be the connecting links which unite these distant shadows in the composition, with

the larger masses near the house. Sometimes several small groups will be almost joined together; at others the effect may be kept up by a small group, aided by a few neighboring single trees. This, for a park-like place. Where the place is small, a pleasure-ground character is all that can be obtained. But by employing chiefly shrubs, and only a few trees, very similar and highly beautiful effects may be attained.

The grand object in all this should be to open to the eye, from the windows or front of the house, a wide surface, partially broken up and divided by groups and masses of trees into a number of pleasing lawns or openings, differing in size and appearance, and producing a charming variety in the scene, either when seen from a given point or when examined in detail. It must not be forgotten that, as a general rule, the grass or surface of the lawn answers as the principal light, and the woods or plantations as the shadows, in the same manner in nature as in painting; and that these should be so managed as to lead the eye to the mansion as the most important object when seen from without, or correspond to it in grandeur and magnitude, when looked upon from within the house. If the surface is too much crowded with groups of foliage, breadth of light will be found wanting; if left too bare, there will be felt, on the other hand, an absence of the noble effect of deep and broad shadows.

One of the loveliest charms of a fine park is, undoubtedly, variation or undulation of surface. Everything, accordingly, which tends to preserve and strengthen this pleasing character, should be kept constantly in view. Where, therefore, there are no obvious objections to such a course, the eminences, gentle swells, or hills, should be planted, in preference to the hollows or depressions. By planting the elevated portions of the grounds, their apparent height is increased; but by planting the hollows, all distinction is lessened and broken up. Indeed, where there is but a trifling and scarcely perceptible undulation, the importance of the swells of surface already existing is surprisingly in-

creased, when this course of planting is adopted; and the whole, to the eye, appears finely varied.

Where the grounds of the residence to be planted are level, or nearly so, and it is desirable to confine the view, on any or all sides, to the lawn or park itself, the boundary groups and masses must be so connected together as from the most striking part or parts of the prospect (near the house for example) to answer this end. This should be done, not by planting a continuous, uniformly thick belt of trees round the outside of the whole; but by so arranging the various outer groups and thickets, that when seen from the given points they shall appear connected in one whole. In this way, there will be an agreeable variation in the margin, made by the various bays, recesses, and detached projections, which could not be so well effected if the whole were one uniformly unbroken strip of wood.

But where the house is so elevated as to command a more extensive view than is comprised in the demesne itself, another course should be adopted. The grounds planted must be made to connect themselves with the surrounding scenery, so as not to produce any violent contrast to the eye, when compared with the adjoining country. If then, as is most frequently the case, the lawn or pleasure-ground join, on either side or sides, cultivated farm lands, the proper connection may be kept up by advancing a few groups or even scattered trees into the neighboring fields. In the middle states there are but few cultivated fields, even in ordinary farms, where there is not to be seen, here and there, a handsome cluster of saplings or a few full grown trees; or if not these, at least some tall growing bushes along the fences, all of which, by a little exercise of this leading principle of connection, can, by the planter of taste, be made to appear with few or trifling additions, to divaricate from, and ramble out of the park itself. Where the park joins natural woods, connection is still easier, and where it bounds upon one of our noble rivers, lakes, or other large sheets of water, of course connection is not expected; for sudden contrast and transition is there both natural and beautiful.

In all cases good taste will suggest that the more polished parts of the lawns and grounds should, whatever character is attempted, be those nearest the house. There the most rare and beautiful sorts of trees are displayed, and the entire plantations agree in elegance with the style of art evinced in the mansion itself. When there is much extent, however, as the eye wanders from the neighborhood of the residence, the whole evinces less polish; and gradually, towards the furthest extremities, grows ruder, until it assimilates itself to the wildness of general nature around. This, of course, applies to grounds of large extent, and must not be so much enforced where the lawn embraced is but moderate, and therefore comes more directly under the eye.

It will be remembered that, in the foregoing section, we stated it as one of the leading principles of the art of Landscape Gardening, that in every instance where the grounds of a country residence have a marked natural character, whether of beautiful or picturesque expression, the efforts of the improver will be most successful if he contributes by his art to aid and strengthen that expression. This should ever be borne in mind when we are commencing any improvements in planting that will affect the general expression of the scene, as there are but few country residences in the United States of any importance which have not naturally some distinct landscape character; and the labors of the improver will be productive of much greater satisfaction and more lasting pleasure, when they aim at effects in keeping with the whole scene, than if no regard be paid to this important point. This will be felt almost intuitively by persons who, perhaps, would themselves be incapable of describing the cause of their gratification, but would perceive the contrary at once; as many are unable to analyze the pleasure derived from harmony in music, while they at once perceive the introduction of discordant notes.

We do not intend that this principle should apply so closely, that extensive grounds naturally picturesque shall have nothing of the softening touches of more perfect beauty;

or that a demesne characterized by the latter expression should not be occasionally enlivened with a few "smart touches" of the former. This is often necessary, indeed, to prevent tame scenery from degenerating into insipidity, or picturesque into wildness, too great to be appropriate in a country residence. Picturesque trees give new spirit to groups of highly beautiful ones, and the latter sometimes



FIG. 11. PLAN OF FARM BEFORE IMPROVEMENT

heighten by contrast the value of the former. All of which, however, does not prevent the predominance of the leading features of either style, sufficiently strong to mark it as such; while, occasionally, something of zest or elegance may be borrowed from the opposite character, to suit the wishes or gratify the taste of the proprietor.

*Ground Plans of Ornamental Plantations.* To illustrate partially our ideas on the arrangement of plantations we

place before the reader two or three examples, premising that the small scale to which they are reduced prevents our giving to them any character beyond that of the general one of the design. The first (Fig. 11) represents a portion, say one third or one half, of a piece of property selected for a country seat, and which has hitherto been kept in tillage as ordinary farm land. The public road, *a*, is the boundary

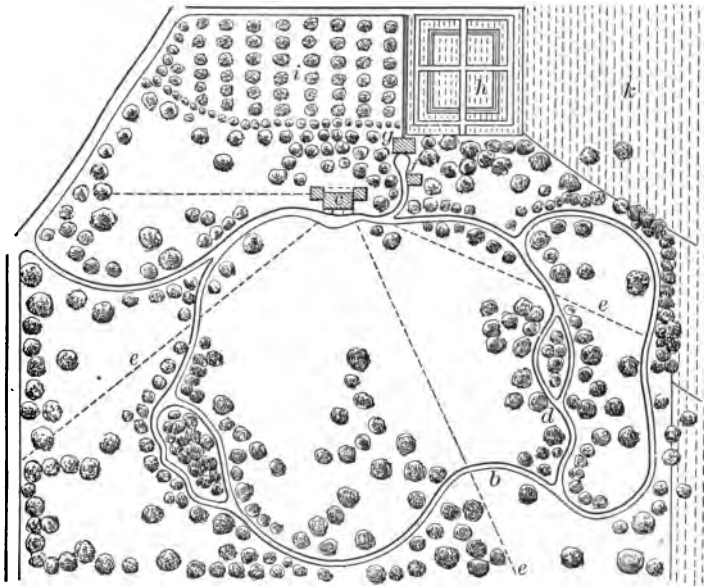


FIG. 12. PLAN OF SAME GROUNDS IMPROVED AS COUNTRY SEAT

on one side: *dd* are prettily wooded dells or hollows, which, together with a few groups near the proposed site of the house, *c*, and a few scattered single trees, make up the aggregate of the original woody embellishments of the locality.

In the next figure (Fig. 12) a ground plan of the place is given, as it would appear after having been judiciously laid out and planted, with several years' growth. At *a*, the approach road leaves the public highway and leads to the

house at *c*; from whence paths of smaller size, *b*, make the circuit of the ornamental portion of the residence, taking advantage of the wooded dells, *d*, originally existing, which offer some scope for varied walks concealed from each other by the intervening masses of thicket. It will be seen here, that one of the largest masses of wood forms a background to the house, concealing also the out-buildings; while, from the windows of the mansion itself, the trees are so arranged as to group in the most pleasing and effective manner; at the same time broad masses of turf meet the eye, and fine distant views are had through the vistas in the lines, *ee*. In this manner the lawn appears divided into four distinct lawns or areas bounded by groups of trees, instead of being dotted over with an unmeaning confusion of irregular masses of foliage. The form of these areas varies also with every change of position in the spectator, as seen from different portions of the grounds, or different points in the walks; and they can be still further varied at pleasure by adding more single trees or small groups, which should always, to produce variety of outline, be placed opposite the salient parts of the wood, and not in the recesses, which latter they would appear to diminish or clog up. The stables are shown at *f*; the barn at *g*, and the kitchen garden adjacent at *h*; the orchard at *i*; and a small portion of the farm lands at *k*; a back entrance to the out-buildings is shown in the rear of the orchard. The plan has been given for a place of seventy acres, thirty of which include the pleasure-grounds, and forty the adjoining farm lands.

Figure 13 is the plan of an American mansion residence of considerable extent, only part of the farm lands, *l*, being here delineated. In this residence, as there is no extensive view worth preserving beyond the bounds of the estate, the pleasure-grounds are surrounded by an irregular and picturesque belt of wood. A fine natural stream or rivulet, which ran through the estate, has been formed into a handsome pond, or small lake, *f*, which adds much to the interest of the grounds. The approach road breaks off from the



highway at the entrance lodge, *a*, and proceeds in easy curves to the mansion, *b*; and the groups of trees on the side of this approach nearest the house, are so arranged that the visitor scarcely obtains more than a glimpse of the latter, until he arrives at the most favorable position for a first impression. From the windows of the mansion, at

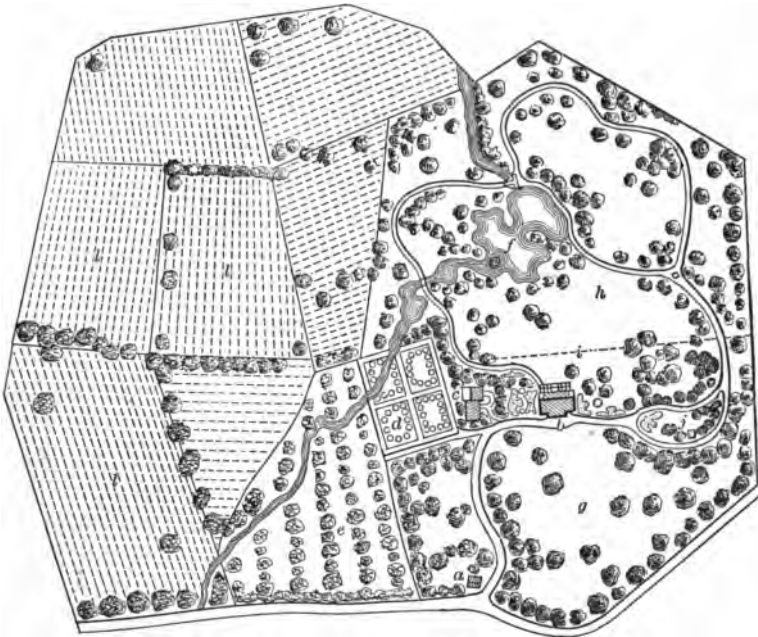


FIG. 13. PLAN OF A MANSION RESIDENCE LAID OUT IN THE  
NATURAL STYLE

either end, the eye ranges over groups of flowers and shrubs; while, on the entrance front, the trees are arranged so as to heighten the natural expression originally existing there. On the other front, the broad mass of light reflected from the green turf at *h*, is balanced by the dark shadows of the picturesque plantations which surround the lake, and skirt the whole boundary. At *i*, a light, inconspicuous wire fence

separates that portion of the ground, *g*, ornamented with flowering shrubs and kept mown by the scythe, from the remainder, of a park-like character, which is kept short by the cropping of animals. At *c*, are shown the stables, carriage house, etc., which, though near the approach road, are concealed by foliage, though easily accessible by a short curved road, returning from the house, so as not to present any road leading in the same direction, to detract from the dignity of the approach in going to it. A prospect tower, or rustic pavilion, on a little eminence overlooking the whole estate, is shown at *j*. The small arabesque beds near the house are filled with masses of choice flowering shrubs and plants; the kitchen garden is shown at *d*, and the orchard at *e*.

Suburban villa residences are, every day, becoming more numerous; and in laying out the grounds around them, and disposing the sylvan features, there is often more ingenuity, and as much taste required, as in treating a country residence of several hundred acres. In the small area of from one half an acre to ten or twelve acres, surrounding often a villa of the first class, it is desirable to assemble many of the same features, and as much as possible of the enjoyment, which are to be found in a large and elegant estate. To do this, the space allotted to various purposes, as the kitchen garden, lawn, etc., must be judiciously portioned out, and so characterized and divided by plantations, that the whole shall appear to be much larger than it really is, from the fact that the spectator is never allowed to see the whole at a single glance; but while each portion is complete in itself, the plan shall present nothing incongruous or ill assorted.

An excellent illustration of this species of residence is afforded the reader in the accompanying plan (Fig. 14) of the grounds of *Riverside Villa*. This pretty villa at Burlington, New Jersey (to which we shall again refer), was lately built, and the grounds, about six or eight acres in extent, laid out, from the designs of John Notman, Esq., architect, of Philadelphia; and while the latter promise a

large amount of beauty and enjoyment, scarcely anything which can be supposed necessary for the convenience or wants of the family, is lost sight of.

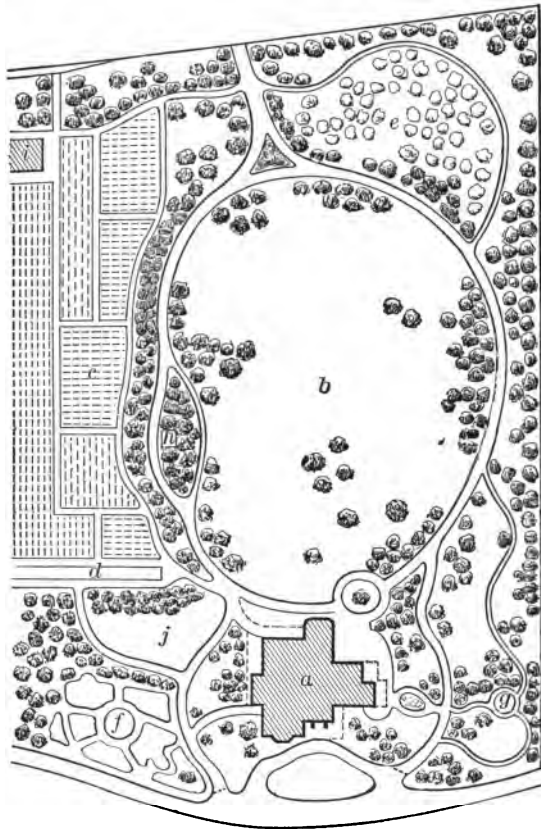


FIG. 14. PLAN OF A SUBURBAN VILLA RESIDENCE

The house, *a*, stands quite near the bank of the river, while one front commands fine water views, and the other looks into the lawn or pleasure grounds, *b*. On one side of the area is the kitchen garden, *c*, separated and concealed from the lawn by thick groups of evergreen and

deciduous trees. At *e*, is a picturesque orchard, in which the fruit trees are planted in groups instead of straight lines, for the sake of effect. Directly under the windows of the drawing-room is the flower garden, *f*; and at *g*, is a seat. The walk around the lawn is also a carriage road, affording entrance and egress from the rear of the grounds, for garden purposes, as well as from the front of the house. At *h*, is situated the ice-house; *d*, hot-beds; *j*, bleaching green; *i*, gardener's house, etc. In the rear of the latter are the stables, which are not shown on the plan.

The embellished farm (*ferme ornée*) is a pretty mode of combining something of the beauty of the landscape garden with the utility of the farm, and we hope to see small country seats of this kind become more general. As regards profit in farming, of course, all modes of arranging or distributing land are inferior to simple square fields; on account of the greater facility of working the land in rectangular plots. But we suppose the owner of the small ornamental farm to be one with whom profit is not the first and only consideration, but who desires to unite with it something to gratify his taste, and to give a higher charm to his rural occupations. In Fig. 15, is shown part of an embellished farm, treated in the picturesque style throughout. The various fields, under grass or tillage, are divided and bounded by winding roads, *a*, bordered by hedges of buckthorn, cedar, and hawthorn, instead of wooden fences; the roads being wide enough to afford a pleasant drive or walk, so as to allow the owner or visitor to enjoy at the same time an agreeable circuit, and a glance at all the various crops and modes of culture. In the plan before us, the approach from the public road is at *b*; the dwelling at *c*; the barns and farm-buildings at *d*; the kitchen garden at *e*; and the orchard at *f*. About the house are distributed some groups of trees, and here the fields, *g*, are kept in grass, and are either mown or pastured. The fields in crops are designated *h*, on the plan; and a few picturesque groups of trees are planted, or allowed to remain, in these, to keep up the general character of the place. A low dell, or rocky thicket,

is situated at *i*. Exceedingly interesting and agreeable effects may be produced, at little cost, in a picturesque farm of this kind. The hedges may be of a great variety of suitable shrubs, and, in addition to those that we have named, we would introduce others of the sweet brier, the Michigan or prairie rose (admirably adapted for the purpose), the flowering crab, and the like — beautiful and

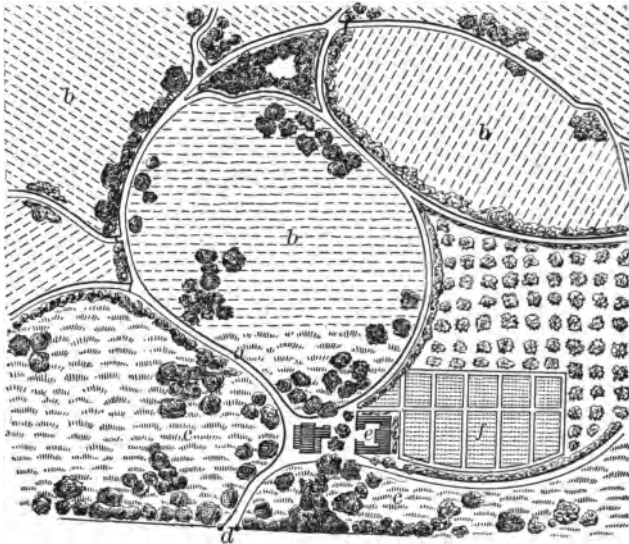


FIG. 15. PLAN OF AN EMBELLISHED FARM (*ferme ornée*)

fragrant in their growth and blossoms. These hedges we would cause to grow thick, rather by interlacing the branches, than by constant shearing or trimming, which would give them a less formal, and a more free and natural air. The winding lanes traversing the farm need only be gravelled near the house, in other portions being left in grass, which will need little care, as it will generally be kept short enough by the passing of men and vehicles over it.

A picturesque or ornamental farm like this would be an agreeable residence for a gentleman retiring into the coun-

try on a small farm, desirous of experimenting for himself with all the new modes of culture. The small and irregular fields would, to him, be rather an advantage, and there would be an air of novelty and interest about the whole residence. Such an arrangement as this would also be suitable for a fruit farm near one of our large towns, the fields being occupied by orchards, vines, grass, and grain. The house and all the buildings should be of a simple, though picturesque and accordant character.

The *cottage ornée* may have more or less ground attached to it. It is the ambition of some to have a great house and little land, and of others (among whom we remember the poet Cowley) to have a little house and a large garden. The latter would seem to be the more natural taste. When the grounds of a cottage are large, they will be treated by the landscape gardener nearly like those of a villa residence; when they are smaller a more quiet and simple character must be aimed at. But even where they consist of only a rood or two, something tasteful and pretty may be arranged.

In making these arrangements, even in the small area of a fourth of an acre, we should study the same principles and endeavor to produce the same harmony of effects, as if we were improving a mansion residence of the first class: The extent of the operations, and the sums lavished, are not by any means necessarily connected with successful and pleasing results. The man of correct taste will, by the aid of very limited means and upon a small surface, be able to afford the mind more true pleasure, than the improver who lavishes thousands without it, creating no other emotion than surprise or pity at the useless expenditure incurred; and the Abbé Delille says nothing more true than that,

“Ce noble emploi demand un artiste qui pense,  
Prodigue de génie, et non pas de dépense.”

From the inspection of plans like these, the tyro may learn something of the manner of arranging plantations,

and of the general effect of the natural style in particular cases and situations. But the knowledge they afford is so far below that obtained by an inspection of the effects in reality, that the latter should in all cases be preferred where it is practicable. In this style, unlike the ancient, it is almost impossible that the same plan should exactly suit any other situation than that for which it was intended, for its great excellence lies in the endless variety produced by its application to different sites, situations, and surfaces; developing the latent capacities of one place and heightening the charms of another.

But the leading principles as regards the formation of plantations, which we have here endeavored briefly to elucidate, are the same in all cases. After becoming familiar with these, should the amateur landscape gardener be at a loss how to proceed, he can hardly do better, as we have before suggested, than to study and recur often to the beautiful compositions and combinations of nature, displayed in her majestic groups, masses, and single trees, as well as open glades and deep thickets; of which, fortunately, in most parts of our country, checkered here and there as it is with beautiful and picturesque scenery, there is no dearth or scarcity. Keeping these few principles in his mind, he will be able to detect new beauties and transfer them to his own estate; for nature is truly inexhaustible in her resources of the Beautiful.

*Classification of Trees as to Expression.* The amateur who wishes to dispose his plantations in the natural style of Landscape Gardening so as to produce graceful or picturesque landscape, will be greatly aided by a study of the peculiar expression of trees individually and in composition. The effect of a certain tree singly is often exceedingly different from that of a group of the same trees. To be fully aware of the effect of groups and masses requires considerable study, and the progress in this study may be greatly facilitated by a recurrence from groups in nature to groups in pictures.

As a further aid to this most desirable species of informa-

tion we shall offer a few remarks on the principal varieties of character afforded by trees in composition.

Almost all trees, with relation to forms, may be divided into three kinds, viz. round-headed trees, oblong or pyramidal trees, and spiry-topped trees; and so far as the expressions of the different species comprised in these distinct classes are concerned, they are, especially when viewed at a distance (as much of the wood seen in a prospect of any extent necessarily must be), productive of nearly the same general effects.



FIG. 16. ROUND-HEADED TREE

Round-headed trees compose by far the largest of these divisions. The term includes all those trees which have an irregular surface in their boughs, more or less varied in outline, but exhibiting in the whole a top or head comparatively round; as the oak, ash, beech, and walnut. They are generally beautiful when young, from their smoothness, and the elegance of their forms; but often grow picturesque when age and time have had an opportunity to produce their wonted effects upon them. In general, however, the different round-headed trees may be considered as the most



appropriate for introduction in highly-cultivated scenery, or landscapes where the character is that of graceful or polished beauty; as they harmonize with almost all scenes, buildings, and natural or artificial objects, uniting well with other forms and doing violence to no expression of scenery. From the numerous breaks in the surface of their foliage, which reflect differently the lights and produce deep shadows, there is great intricacy and variety in the heads of many round-topped trees; and therefore, as an outer surface to meet the eye in a plantation, they are much softer and more pleasing than the unbroken line exhibited by the sides of oblong or spiry-topped trees. The sky outline also, or the upper part of the head, varies greatly in round-topped trees from the irregularity in the disposition of the upper branches in different species, as the oak and ash, or even between individual specimens of the same kind of tree, as the oak, of which we rarely see two trees alike in form and outline, although they have the same characteristic expression; while on the other hand no two verdant objects can bear a greater general resemblance to each other and show more sameness of figure than two Lombardy poplars.

"In a tree," says Uvedale Price, "of which the foliage is everywhere full and unbroken, there can be but little variety of *form*; then, as the sun strikes only on the surface, neither can there be much variety of *light* and *shade*; and as the apparent color of objects changes according to the different degrees of light or shade in which they are placed, there can be as little variety of *tint*; and lastly, as there are none of these openings that excite and nourish curiosity, but the eye is everywhere opposed by one uniform leafy screen, there can be as little intricacy as variety." From these remarks, it will be perceived that even among round-headed trees there may be great difference in the comparative beauty of different sorts; and judging from the excellent standard here laid down, it will also be seen how much in the eye of a painter a tree with a beautifully diversified surface, as the oak, surpasses in the composition of a scene

one with a very regular and compact surface and outline, as the horse-chestnut. In planting large masses of wood, therefore, or even in forming large groups in park scenery, round-headed trees of the ordinary loose and varied manner of growth common in the majority of forest trees, are greatly to be preferred to all others. When they cover large tracts, as several acres, they convey an emotion of grandeur to the mind; when they form vast forests of thousands of acres, they produce a feeling of sublimity; in the landscape garden when they stand alone, or in fine groups, they are graceful or beautiful. While young they have an elegant appearance; when old they generally become majestic or picturesque. Other trees may suit scenery or scenes of particular and decided characters, but round-headed trees are decidedly the chief adornment of general landscape.



FIG. 17. SPIRY-TOPPED TREE

Spiry-topped trees (Fig. 17) are distinguished by straight leading stems and horizontal branches, which are comparatively small, and taper gradually to a point. The foliage is generally evergreen, and in most trees of this class hangs

in parallel or drooping tufts from the branches. The various evergreen trees, composing the spruce and fir families, most of the pines, the cedar, and among deciduous trees, the larch, belong to this division. Their hue is generally much darker than that of deciduous trees, and there is a strong similarity, or almost sameness, in the different kinds of trees which may properly be called spiry-topped.

From their sameness of form and surface this class of trees, when planted in large tracts or masses, gives much less pleasure than round-headed trees; and the eye is soon wearied with the monotony of appearance presented by long rows, groups, or masses, of the same form, outline, and appearance; to say nothing of the effect of the uniform dark color, unrelieved by the warmer tints of deciduous trees. Any one can bear testimony to this, who has travelled through a pine, hemlock, or fir forest, where he could not fail to be struck with its gloom, tediousness, and monotony, especially when contrasted with the variety and beauty in a natural wood of deciduous, round-headed trees.

Although spiry-topped trees in large masses cannot be generally admired for ornamental plantations, yet they have a character of their own, which is very striking and peculiar, and we may add, in a high degree valuable to the Landscape Gardener. Their general expression when single or scattered is extremely spirited, wild, and picturesque; and when judiciously introduced into artificial scenery, they produce the most charming and unique effects. The situations where they have most effect is among rocks and in very irregular surfaces, and especially on the steep sides of high mountains, where their forms and the direction of their growth seem to harmonize with the pointed rocky summits. Fir and pine forests are extremely dull and monotonous in sandy plains and smooth surfaces (as in the pine barrens of the southern states); but among the broken rocks, craggy precipices, and otherwise endlessly varied surfaces (as in the Alps, abroad, and the various rocky heights in the Highlands of the Hudson and the Alleghanies, at home) they are full of variety.

It will readily be seen, therefore, that spiry-topped trees should always be planted in considerable quantities in wild, broken, and picturesque scenes, where they will appear perfectly in keeping, and add wonderfully to the peculiar beauty of the situation. In all grounds where there are abruptly varied surfaces, steep banks, or rocky precipices, this class of trees lends its efficient aid to strengthen the prevailing beauty, and to complete the finish of the picture. In smooth, level surfaces, though spiry-topped trees cannot



FIG. 18. OBLONG-HEADED TREE

be thus extensively employed they are by no means to be neglected or thought valueless, but may be so combined and mingled with other round-headed and oblong-headed trees, as to produce very rich and pleasing effects. A tall larch or two, or a few spruces rising out of the centre of a group, give it life and spirit, and add greatly, both by contrast of form and color, to the force of round-headed trees. A stately and regular white pine or hemlock, or a few thin groups of the same trees peeping out from amidst, or bordering a large mass of deciduous trees, have great power

in adding to the interest which the same awakens in the mind of the spectator.

Care must be taken, however, that the very spirited effect which is here aimed at, is not itself defeated by the over-anxiety of the planter, who, in scattering too profusely these very strongly marked trees, makes them at last so plentiful, as to give the whole a mingled and confused look, in which neither the graceful and sweeping outlines of the round-headed nor the picturesque summits of the spiry-topped trees predominate; as the former decidedly should, in all scenes where an expression of peculiarly irregular kind is not aimed at.

The larch, to which we shall hereafter recur at some length, may be considered one of the most picturesque trees of this division; and being more rapid in its growth than most evergreens, it may be used as a substitute for, or in conjunction with them, where effect is speedily desired.

Oblong-headed trees show heads of foliage more lengthened out, more formal, and generally more tapering, than round-headed ones. They differ from spiry-topped trees in having upright branches instead of horizontal ones, and in forming a conical or pyramidal mass of foliage, instead of a spiry, tufted one. They are mostly deciduous; and approaching more nearly to round-headed trees than spiry-topped ones do, they may perhaps be more frequently introduced. The Lombardy poplar may be considered the representative of this division, as the oak is of the first, and the larch and fir of the second. Abroad, the oriental cypress, an evergreen, is used to produce similar effects in scenery.

The great use of the Lombardy poplar, and other similar trees in composition, is to relieve or break into groups, large masses of wood. This it does very effectually, when its tall summit rises at intervals from among round-headed trees, forming pyramidal centres to groups where there was only a swelling and flowing outline. Formal rows, or groups of oblong-headed trees, however, are tiresome and monotonous to the last degree; a straight line of them being scarcely better in appearance than a tall, stiff, gigantic

hedge. Examples of this can be easily found in many parts of the Union where the crude and formal taste of proprietors, by leading them to plant long lines of Lombardy poplars, has had the effect of destroying the beauty of many a fine prospect and building.\*

Conical or oblong-headed trees, when carefully employed, are very effective for purposes of contrast, in conjunction with horizontal lines of buildings such as we see in Grecian or Italian architecture. Near such edifices, sparingly introduced, and mingled in small proportion with round-headed trees, they contrast advantageously with the long cornices, flat roofs, and horizontal lines that predominate in their exteriors. Lombardy poplars are often thus introduced in pictures of Italian scenery, where they sometimes break the formality of a long line of wall in the happiest manner. Nevertheless, if they should be indiscriminately employed, or even used in any considerable portion in the decoration of the ground immediately adjoining a building of any pretensions, they would inevitably defeat this purpose, and by their tall and formal growth diminish the apparent magnitude, as well as the elegance of the house.

Drooping trees, though often classed with oblong-headed trees, differ from them in so many particulars, that they deserve to be ranked under a separate head. To this class belong the weeping willow, the weeping birch, the drooping elm, etc. Their prominent characteristics are gracefulness and elegance; and we consider them as unfit, therefore, to be employed to any extent in scenes where it is desirable to keep up the expression of a wild or highly picturesque character. As single objects, or tastefully grouped in beautiful landscape, they are in excellent keeping, and contribute much to give value to the leading expression.

When drooping trees are mixed indiscriminately with

\* In America the Lombardy poplar has now come to be a sort of shibboleth. The critical naturalists refuse it because of its exotic character, while the architects and formalists use it with dangerous frequency. There is some criticism, too, of the Lombardy poplar as being a "cheap" tree, *i.e.*, quickly grown and quickly lost. — F. A. W.

other round-headed trees in the composition of groups or masses, much of their individual character is lost, as it depends not so much on the top (as in oblong and spiry trees) as upon the side branches, which are of course concealed by those of the adjoining trees. Drooping trees, therefore, as elms, birches, etc., are shown to the best advantage on the borders of groups or the boundaries of plantations. It must not be forgotten, but constantly kept in mind, that all strongly marked trees, like bright colors in pictures, only admit of occasional employment; and that the very object aimed at in introducing them will be defeated if they are brought into the lawn and park in masses, and distributed heedlessly on every side. An English author very justly remarks, therefore, that the poplar, the willow, and the drooping birch, are "most dangerous trees in the hands of a planter who has not considerable knowledge and good taste in the composition of a landscape." Some of them, as the native elm, from their abounding in our own woods, may appear oftener; while others which have a peculiar and exotic look, as the weeping willow, should only be seen in situations where they either do not disturb the prevailing expression, or (which is better) where they are evidently in good keeping. "The weeping willow," says Gilpin, with his usual good taste, "is not adapted to sublime objects. We wish it not to screen the broken buttress and Gothic windows of an abbey, or to overshadow the battlements of a ruined castle. These offices it resigns to the oak, whose dignity can support them. The weeping willow seeks an humble scene — some romantic footpath bridge, which it half conceals, or some grassy pool over which it hangs its streaming foliage,

——— 'And dips  
Its pendent boughs, as if to drink.'"

Having now described the peculiar characteristics of these different classes of round-headed, spiry-topped oblong, and drooping trees, we should consider the proper method by which a harmonious combination of the different forms

composing them may be made so as not to violate correct principles of taste. An indiscriminate mixture of their different forms would, it is evident, produce anything but an agreeable effect. For example, let a person plant together in a group, three trees of totally opposite forms and expressions, viz., a weeping willow, an oak, and a poplar; and the expression of the whole would be destroyed by the confusion resulting from their discordant forms. On the other hand, the mixture of trees that exactly corresponds in their forms, if these forms, as in oblong or drooping trees, are similar, will infallibly create sameness. In order then to produce beautiful variety which shall neither on the one side run into confusion, nor on the other verge into monotony, it is requisite to give some little attention to the harmony of form and color in the composition of trees in artificial plantations.

The only rules which we can suggest to govern the planter are these: First, if a certain leading expression is desired in a group of trees, together with as great a variety as possible, such species must be chosen as harmonize with each other in certain leading points. And, secondly, in occasionally intermingling trees of opposite characters, discordance may be prevented, and harmonious expression promoted, by interposing other trees of an intermediate character.

In the first case, suppose it is desired to form a group of trees, in which gracefulness must be the leading expression. The willow alone would have the effect; but in groups, willows alone produce sameness: in order therefore, to give variety, we must choose other trees which, while they differ from the willow in some particulars, agree in others. The elm has much larger and darker foliage, while it has also a drooping spray; the weeping birch differs in its leaves, but agrees in the pensile flow of its branches; the common birch has few pendent boughs, but resembles in the airy lightness of its leaves; and the three-thorned acacia, though its branches are horizontal, has delicate foliage of nearly the same hue and floating lightness as the willow.



Here we have a group of five trees, which is, in the whole, full of gracefulness and variety, while there is nothing in the composition inharmonious to the practised eye.

To illustrate the second case, let us suppose a long sweeping outline of maples, birches, and other light, mellow-colored trees, which the improver wishes to vary and break into groups, by spiry-topped, evergreen trees. It is evident, that if these trees were planted in such a manner as to peer abruptly out of the light-colored foliage of the former trees, in dark or almost black masses of tapering verdure, the effect would be by no means so satisfactory and pleasing, as if there were a partial transition from the mellow, pale green of the maples, etc., to the darker hues of the oak, ash, or beech, and finally the sombre tint of the evergreens. Thus much for the coloring; and if, in addition to this, oblong-headed trees or pyramidal trees were also placed near and partly intermingled with the spiry-topped ones, the unity of the whole composition would be still more complete.\*

Contrasts, again, are often admissible in woody scenery; and we would not wish to lose many of our most superb trees, because they could not be introduced in particular portions of landscape. Contrasts in trees may be so violent as to be displeasing; as in the example of the groups of the three trees, the willow, poplar, and oak: or they may be such as to produce spirited and pleasing effects. This must be effected by planting the different divisions of

\* We are persuaded that very few persons are aware of the beauty, varied and endless, that may be produced by arranging trees with regard to their *coloring*. It requires the eye and genius of a Claude or a Poussin, to develop all these hidden beauties of harmonious combination. Gilpin rightly says, in speaking of the dark Scotch fir, "with regard to color in general, I think I speak the language of painting, when I assert that the picturesque eye makes little distinction in this matter. It has no attachment to one color in preference to another, but considers the beauty of all coloring as resulting, not from the colors themselves, but almost entirely from their harmony with other colors in their neighborhood. So that as the Scotch fir tree is combined or stationed, it forms a beautiful umbrage or a murky spot." — A. J. D.

trees, first, in small leading groups, and then by effecting a union between the groups of different character, by intermingling those of the nearest similarity into and near the groups: in this way, by easy transitions from the drooping to the round-headed, and from these to the tapering trees, the whole of the foliage and forms harmonize well.

"Trees," observes Mr. Whately, in his elegant treatise on this subject, "which differ in but one of these circumstances, of shape, green, or growth, though they agree in every other, are sufficiently distinguished for the purpose of variety; if they differ in two or three, they become contrasts: if in all, they are opposite, and seldom group well together. Those, on the contrary, which are of one character, and are distinguished only as the characteristic mark is strongly or faintly impressed upon them, form a beautiful mass, and unity is preserved without sameness." \*

There is another circumstance connected with the color of trees, that will doubtless suggest itself to the improver of taste, the knowledge of which may sometimes be turned to valuable account. We mean the effects produced in the apparent coloring of a landscape by distance, which painters term aerial perspective. Standing at a certain position in a scene, the coloring is deep, rich, and full in the foreground, more tender and mellow in the middle-ground, and softening to a pale tint in the distance.

"Where to the eye three well marked distances  
Spread their peculiar coloring, vivid green,  
Warm brown, and black opaque the foreground bears  
Conspicuous: sober olive coldly marks  
The second distance; thence the third declines  
In softer blue, or lessening still, is lost  
In fainted purple. When thy taste is call'd  
To deck a scene where nature's self presents  
All these distinct gradations, then rejoice  
As does the Painter, and like him apply  
Thy colors; plant thou on each separate part  
Its proper foliage."

\* Observations on Modern Gardening.

Advantage may occasionally be taken of this peculiarity in the gradation of color, in Landscape Gardening, by the creation, as it were, of an artificial distance. In grounds and scenes of limited extent, the apparent size and breadth may be increased, by planting a majority of the trees in the foreground, of dark tints, and the boundary with foliage of a much lighter hue.

An acquaintance, individually, with the different species of trees of indigenous and foreign growth, which may be cultivated with success in this climate, is absolutely essential to the amateur or the professor of Landscape Gardening. The tardiness or rapidity of their growth, the periods at which their leaves and flowers expand, the soils they love best, and their various habits and characters, are all subjects of the highest interest to him. In short, as a love of the country almost commences with a knowledge of its peculiar characteristics, the pure air, the fresh enamelled turf, and the luxuriance and beauty of the whole landscape; so the taste for the embellishment of rural residences must grow out of an admiration for beautiful trees, and the delightful effects they are capable of producing in the hands of persons of taste and lovers of nature.

Admitting this, we think, in the comparatively meagre state of general information on this subject among us, we shall render an acceptable service to the novice, by giving a somewhat detailed description of the character and habits of most of the finest hardy forest and ornamental trees. Among those living in the country, there are many who care little for the beauties of Landscape Gardening, who are yet interested in those trees which are remarkable for the beauty of their forms, their foliage, their blossoms, or their useful purposes. This, we hope, will be a sufficient explanation for the apparently disproportionate number of pages which we shall devote to this part of our subject.

## CHAPTER IV

### *TREATMENT OF GROUND*

——— “Strength may wield the ponderous spade,  
May turn the clod and wheel the compost home;  
But elegance, chief grace the garden shows,  
And most attractive, is the fair result  
Of thought, the creature of a polished mind.”

COWPER.

**G**ROUND is undoubtedly the most unwieldy and ponderous material that comes under the care of the Landscape Gardener. It is not only difficult to remove, the operations of the leveller rarely extending below two or three feet of the surface; but the effect produced by a given quantity of labor expended upon it is generally much less than when the same has been bestowed in the formation of plantations, or the erection of buildings. The achievements of art upon ground appear so trifling, too, when we behold the apparent facility with which nature has arranged it in such a variety of forms, that the former sink into insignificance when compared with the latter.

For these reasons, the operations to be performed upon ground in this country, will generally be limited to the neighborhood of the house, or the scenery directly under the eye. Here, by judicious levelling and smoothing in some cases, or by raising gentle eminences with interposing hollows in others, much may be done at a moderate expense, to improve the beauty of the surrounding landscape.

*Roads and walks* are so directly connected with operations on the surface of the ground, and with the disposition of plantations, which we have already made familiar to the reader, that we shall introduce in this place a few remarks relative to their direction and formation.

The *Approach* is by far the most important of these

routes. It is the private road, leading from the public highway directly to the house itself. It should therefore bear a proportionate breadth and size, and exhibit marks of good keeping, in accordance with the dignity of the mansion.

In the ancient style of gardening, the approach was so formed as to enter directly in front of the house, affording a full view of that portion of the edifice, and no other. A line drawn as directly as possible, and evenly bordered on each side with a tall avenue of trees, was the whole expenditure of art necessary in its formation. It is true, the simplicity of design was often more than counterbalanced by the difficulty of levelling, grading, and altering the surface, necessary to please the geometric eye; but the rules were as plain and unchangeable, as the lines were parallel and undeviating.

In the present more advanced state of Landscape Gardening, the formation of the approach has become equally a matter of artistical skill with other details of the art. The house is generally so approached, that the eye shall first meet it in an angular direction, displaying not only the beauty of the architectural façade but also one of the end elevations, thus giving a more complete idea of the size, character, or elegance of the building: and instead of leading in a direct line from the gate to the house, it curves in easy lines through certain portions of the park or lawn, until it reaches that object.

If the point where the approach is to start from the highway, be not already determined past alteration, it should be so chosen as to afford a sufficient drive through the grounds before arriving at the house, to give the stranger some idea of the extent of the whole property: to allow an agreeable diversity of surface over which to lead it: and lastly in such a manner as not to interfere with the convenience of ready access to and from the mansion.

This point being decided, and the other being the mansion and adjacent buildings, it remains to lay out the road in such gradual curves as will appear easy and graceful,

without verging into rapid turns or formal stiffness. Since the modern style has become partially known and adopted here, some persons appear to have supposed that nature "has a horror of straight lines," and consequently, believing that they could not possibly err, they immediately ran into the other extreme, filling their grounds with zig-zag and regularly serpentine roads, still more horrible: which can only be compared to the contortions of a wounded snake dragging its way slowly over the earth.

There are two guiding principles which have been laid down for the formation of approach roads. The first, that the curves should never be so great, or lead over surfaces so unequal, as to make it disagreeable to drive upon them; and the second, that the road should never curve without some reason, either real or apparent.

The most natural method of forming a winding approach where the ground is gently undulating, is to follow, in some degree, the depressions of surface, and to curve round the eminences. This is an excellent method, so long as it does not lead us in too circuitous a direction, nor, as we before hinted, make the road itself too uneven. When either of these happens, the easy, gradual flow of the curve in the proper direction, must be maintained by levelling or grading, to produce the proper surface.

Nothing can be more unmeaning than to see an approach, or any description of road, winding hither and thither, through an extensive level lawn, towards the house, without the least apparent reason for the curves. Happily, we are not, therefore, obliged to return to the straight line; but gradual curves may always be so arranged as to appear necessarily to wind round the groups of trees, which otherwise would stand in the way. Wherever a bend in the road is intended, a cluster or group of greater or less size and breadth proportionate to the curve, should be placed in the projection formed. These trees, as soon as they attain some size, if they are properly arranged, we may suppose to have originally stood there, and the road naturally to have curved, to avoid destroying them.

This arrangement of trees bordering an extended approach road, in connection with the various other groups, masses, and single trees, in the adjacent lawn, will in most cases have the effect of concealing the house from the spectator approaching it, except, perhaps, from one or two points. It has, therefore, been considered a matter worthy of consideration, at what point or points the first view of the house shall be obtained. If seen at too great a distance, as in the case of a large estate, it may appear more diminutive and of less magnitude than it should; or, if first viewed in some other position, it may strike the eye of a stranger, at that point, unfavorably. The best, and indeed the only way to decide the matter, is to go over the whole ground covered by the approach route carefully, and select a spot or spots sufficiently near to give the most favorable and striking view of the house itself. This, if openings are to be made, can only be done in winter; but when the ground is to be newly planted, it may be prosecuted at any season.

The late Mr. Repton, who was one of the most celebrated English practical landscape gardeners, has laid down in one of his works, the following rules on the subject, which we quote, not as applying in all cases, but to show what are generally thought the principal requisites of this road in the modern style.

*First.* It ought to be a road to the house, and to that principally.

*Secondly.* If it be not naturally the nearest road possible, it ought artificially to be made to appear so.

*Thirdly.* The artificial obstacles which make this road the nearest, ought to appear natural.

*Fourthly.* Where an approach quits the high road, it ought not to break from it at right angles, or in such a manner as to rob the entrance of importance, but rather at some bend of the public road, from which a lodge or gate may be more conspicuous; and where the high road may appear to branch from the approach, rather than the approach from the high road.

*Fifthly.* After the approach enters the park, it should

avoid skirting along its boundary, which betrays the want of extent or unity of property.

*Sixthly.* The house, unless very large and magnificent, should not be seen at so great a distance as to make it appear much less than it really is.

*Seventhly.* The first view of the house should be from the most pleasing point of sight.

*Eighthly.* As soon as the house is visible from the approach, there should be no temptation to quit it (which will ever be the case if the road be at all circuitous), unless sufficient obstacles, such as water or inaccessible ground, appear to justify its course.\*

Although there are many situations where these rules must be greatly modified in practice, yet the improver will do well to bear them in mind, as it is infinitely more easy to make occasional deviations from general rules, than to carry out a tasteful improvement without any guiding principles.

There are many fine country residences on the banks of the Hudson, Connecticut, and other rivers, where the proprietors are often much perplexed and puzzled, by the situation of their houses; the building presenting really two fronts, while they appear to desire only one. Such is the case when the estate is situated between the public road on one side, and the river on the other; and we have often seen the approach artificially tortured into a long circuitous route, in order finally to arrive at what the proprietor considers the true front, viz., the side nearest the river. When a building is so situated, much the most elegant effect is produced by having two fronts: one, the *entrance front*, with the porch or portico nearest the road, and the other, the *river front*, facing the water. The beauty of the whole is often surprisingly enhanced by this arrangement, for the visitor, after passing by the approach through a considerable portion of the grounds, with perhaps but slight and partial glimpses of the river, is most agreeably surprised on entering the house, and looking from the drawing-room windows of the other front, to behold another

\* Repton's Inquiry into the Changes of Taste in Landscape Gardening.



beautiful scene totally different from the last, enriched and ennobled by the wide-spread sheet of water before him. Much of the effect produced by this agreeable surprise from the interior, it will readily be seen, would be lost, if the stranger had already driven round and alighted on the river front.

*The Drive* is a variety of road rarely seen among us, yet which may be made a very agreeable feature in some of our country residences, at a small expense. It is intended for exercise more secluded than that upon the public road, and to show the interesting portions of the place from the carriage, or on horseback. Of course it can only be formed upon places of considerable extent; but it enhances the enjoyment of such places very highly, in the estimation of those who are fond of equestrian exercises. It generally commences where the approach terminates, viz., near the house: and from thence, proceeds in the same easy curvilinear manner through various parts of the grounds, farm or estate. Sometimes it sweeps through the pleasure grounds, and returns along the very beach of the river, beneath the fine overhanging foliage of its projecting bank; sometimes it proceeds towards some favorite point of view, or interesting spot on the landscape; or at others it leaves the lawn and traverses the farm, giving the proprietor an opportunity to examine his crops, or exhibit his agricultural resources to his friends.

*Walks* are laid out for purposes similar to drives, but are much more common, and may be introduced into every scene, however limited. They are intended solely for promenades, or exercise on foot, and should therefore be dry and firm, if possible, at all seasons when it is desirable to use them. Some may be open to the south, sheltered with evergreens, and made dry and hard for a warm promenade in winter; others formed of closely mown turf, and thickly shaded by a leafy canopy of verdure, for a cool retreat in the midst of summer. Others again may lead to some sequestered spot, and terminate in a secluded rustic seat, or conduct to some shaded dell, or rugged eminence,

where an extensive prospect can be enjoyed. Indeed, the genius of the place must suggest the direction, length, and number of the walks to be laid out, as no fixed rules can be imposed in a subject so everchanging and different. It should, however, never be forgotten, that the walk ought always to correspond to the scene it traverses, being rough where the latter is wild and picturesque, sometimes scarcely differing from a common footpath, and more polished as the surrounding objects show evidences of culture and high keeping. In direction, like the approach, it should take easy flowing curves, though it may often turn more abruptly at the interposition of an obstacle. The chief beauty of curved and bending lines in walks, lies in the new scenes which by means of them are opened to the eye. In the straight walk of half a mile the whole is seen at a glance, and there is too often but little to excite the spectator to pursue the search; but in the modern style, at every few rods, a new turn in the walk opens a new prospect to the beholder, and "leads the eye," as Hogarth graphically expressed it, "a kind of wanton chase," continually affording new refreshment and variety.

*Fences* are often among the most unsightly and offensive objects in our country seats. Some persons appear to have a passion for subdividing their grounds into a great number of fields; a process which is scarcely ever advisable even in common farms, but for which there can be no apology in elegant residences. The close proximity of fences to the house gives the whole place a confined and mean character. "The mind," says Repton, "feels a certain disgust under a sense of confinement in any situation, however beautiful." A wide-spread lawn, on the contrary, where no boundaries are conspicuous, conveys an impression of ample extent and space for enjoyment. It is frequently the case that, on that side of the house nearest the outbuildings, fences are, for convenience, brought in its close neighborhood, and here they are easily concealed by plantations; but on the other sides, open and unobstructed views should be preserved, by removing all barriers not absolutely necessary.

Nothing is more common, in the places of cockneys who become inhabitants of the country, than a display immediately around the dwelling of a spruce paling of carpentry, neatly made, and painted white or green; an abomination among the fresh fields, of which no person of taste could be guilty. To fence off a small plot around a fine house, in the midst of a lawn of fifty acres, is a perversity which we could never reconcile, with even the lowest perception of beauty.\* An old stone wall covered with creepers and climbing plants, may become a picturesque barrier a thousand times superior to such a fence. But there is never one instance in a thousand where any barrier is necessary. Where it is desirable to separate the house from the level grass of the lawn, let it be done by an architectural terrace of stone, or a raised platform of gravel supported by turf, which will confer importance and dignity upon the building, instead of giving it a petty and trifling expression.

*Verdant hedges* are elegant substitutes for stone or wooden fences, and we are surprised that their use has not been hitherto more general. We have ourselves been making experiments for the last ten years with various hedge-plants, and have succeeded in obtaining some hedges which are now highly admired. Five or six years will, in this climate, under proper care, be sufficient to produce hedges of great beauty, capable of withstanding the attacks of every kind of cattle; barriers, too, which will outlast many generations. The common *Arbor Vitæ*, which grows in great abundance in many districts, forms one of the most superb hedges, without the least care in trimming; † the foliage growing thickly down to the very ground, and being evergreen, the hedge remains clothed the whole year. Our common thorns form hedges of great strength and beauty. They are indeed much better adapted to this climate than

\* Picket fences about farm and village dwellings were formerly considered very stylish, but are now quite out of vogue. There was a time, of course, when fences were necessary for protection from vagrant cattle, and the practice grew into custom from this necessity. — F. A. W.

† It is much better when trimmed annually in June. — F. A. W.

the English Hawthorn, which often suffers from the unclouded radiance of our midsummer sun. In autumn, too, it loses its foliage much sooner than our native sorts, some of which assume a brilliant scarlet when the foliage is fading in autumn. In New England, the buckthorn \* is preferred from its rapid and luxuriant growth; and in the middle states the osage orange is becoming a favorite for its glossy and polished foliage. The privet is a rapid growing shrub, well fitted for interior divisions.† Picturesque hedges are easily formed by intermingling a variety of flowering shrubs, sweet briars, etc., and allowing the whole to grow together in rich masses. For this purpose the Michigan rose is admirably adapted at the north, and the Cherokee rose at the south. In all cases where hedges are employed in the natural style of landscape (and not in close connection with highly artificial objects, buildings, etc.), a more agreeable effect will be produced by allowing the hedge to grow somewhat irregular in form, or varying it by planting near it other small trees and shrubs to break the outline, than by clipping it in even and formal lines. Hedges may be obtained in a single season, by planting long shoots of the osier willow, or any other tree which throws out roots easily from cuttings.

A simple and pleasing barrier, in good keeping with cottage residences, may be formed of rustic work, as it is termed.‡ For this purpose, stout rods of any of our native forest trees are chosen (cedar being preferable) with the bark on, six to ten feet in length; these are sharpened and

\* The Buckthorn is perhaps the best plant where a thick screen is very speedily desired. It is not liable to the attack of insects; grows very thickly at the bottom, at once; and will make an efficient screen sooner than almost any other plant. — A. J. D.

† The osage orange has been much used for utility hedges in the middle states, but is objectionable for lawn use on account of its thorns. The privet (various species) has become the favorite ornamental hedge plant, though many other species are now planted. A few of these are hemlock, spruce, barberry, spirea, lilac, syringa, hydrangea. — F. A. W.

‡ This fancy for "rustic work" was very strong in Mr. Downing's time, but the fashion has now completely changed, and for the better. — F. A. W.

driven into the ground in the form of a lattice, or wrought into any figures of trellis that the fancy may suggest. When covered with luxuriant vines and climbing plants, such a barrier is often admirable for its richness and variety.

The sunken fence, fosse, or *ha-ha*, is an English invention, used in separating that portion of the lawn near the house, from the part grazed by deer or cattle, and is only a ditch sufficiently wide and deep to render communication difficult on opposite sides. When the ground slopes from the house, such a sunk fence is invisible to a person near the latter, and answers the purpose of a barrier without being in the least obtrusive.\*

In a succeeding section we shall refer to terraces with their parapets, which are by far the most elegant barriers for a highly decorated flower garden, or for the purpose of maintaining a proper connection between the house and the grounds, a subject which is scarcely at all attended to, or its importance even recognized as yet among us.

\* This contrivance has not been so frequently used in America as its merits would warrant. A good example is seen by thousands of visitors annually at Mt. Vernon. — F. A. W.

## CHAPTER V

### *TREATMENT OF WATER*

— The dale

With woods o'erhung, and shagg'd with mossy rocks,  
Whence on each hand the gushing waters play,  
And down the rough cascade white-dashing fall,  
Or gleam in lengthened vista through the trees.

THOMSON.

THE delightful and captivating effects of water in landscapes of every description, are universally known and admitted. The boundless sea, the broad full river, the dashing noisy brook, and the limpid meandering rivulet, are all possessed of their peculiar charms; and when combined with scenes otherwise finely disposed and well wooded, they add a hundred fold to their beauty. The soft and trembling shadows of the surrounding trees and hills, as they fall upon a placid sheet of water — the brilliant light which the crystal surface reflects in pure sunshine, mirroring, too, at times in its resplendent bosom, all the cerulean depth and snowy whiteness of the overhanging sky, give it an almost magical effect in a beautiful landscape. The murmur of the babbling brook, that

“In linked sweetness long drawn out,”

falls upon the ear in some quiet secluded spot, is inexpressibly soothing and delightful to the mind; and the deeper sound of the cascade that rushes, with an almost musical dash, over its bed of moss-covered rock, is one of the most fascinating of the many elements of enjoyment in a fine country seat. The simplest or the most monotonous view may be enlivened by the presence of water in any considerable quantity; and the most picturesque and striking landscape will, by its addition, receive a new charm,

inexpressibly enhancing all its former interest. In short, as no place can be considered perfectly complete without either a water view or water upon its own grounds, wherever it does not so exist and can be easily formed by artificial means, no man will neglect to take advantage of so fine a source of embellishment as is this element in some of its varied forms.

“—— Fleuves, ruisseaux, beaux lacs, claires fontaines,  
Venez, portez partout la vie et la fraîcheur?  
Ah! qui peut remplacer votre aspect enchanteur?  
De près il nous amuse, et de loin nous invite:  
C'est le premier qu'on cherche, et le dernier qu'on quitte.  
Vous fécondez les champs; vous répétez les cieux;  
Vous enchantez l'oreille, et vous charmez les yeux.”

In this country, where the progress of gardening and improvements of this nature, is rather shown in a simple and moderate embellishment of a large number of villas and country seats, than by a lavish and profuse expenditure on a few entailed places, as in the residences of the English nobility, the formation of large pieces of water at great cost and extreme labor, would be considered both absurd and uncalled for. Indeed, when nature has so abundantly spread before us such an endless variety of superb lakes, rivers, and streams of every size and description, the efforts of man to rival her great works by mere imitation, would, in most cases, only become ludicrous by contrast.

When, however, a number of perpetual springs cluster together, or a rill, rivulet, or brook, runs through an estate in such a manner as easily to be improved or developed into an elegant expanse of water in any part of the grounds, we should not hesitate to take advantage of so fortunate a circumstance. Besides the additional beauty conferred upon the whole place by such an improvement, the proprietor may also derive an inducement from its utility; for the possession of a small lake, well stocked with carp, trout, pickerel, or any other of the excellent pond fish, which thrive and propagate extremely well in clear fresh water, is a real advantage which no one will undervalue.

There is no department of Landscape Gardening which appears to have been less understood in this country than the management of water. Although there have not been many attempts made in this way, yet the occasional efforts that have been put forth in various parts of the country, in the shape of square, circular, and oblong pools of water, indicate a state of knowledge extremely meagre, in the art of Landscape Gardening. The highest scale to which these pieces of water rise in our estimation is that of respectable horse-ponds; beautiful objects they certainly are not. They are generally round or square, with perfectly smooth, flat banks on every side, and resemble a huge basin set down in the middle of a green lawn.

*Lakes or ponds* are the most beautiful forms in which water can be displayed in the grounds of a country residence. They invariably produce their most pleasing effects when they are below the level of the house; as, if above, they are lost to the view, and if placed on a level with the eye, they are seen to much less advantage. We conceive that they should never be introduced where they do not naturally exist, except with the concurrence of the following circumstances. First, a sufficient quantity of running water to maintain at all times an overflow, for nothing can be more unpleasant than a stagnant pool, as nothing is more delightful than pure, clear, limpid water; and secondly, some natural formation of ground, in which the proposed water can be expanded, that will not only make it appear natural, but diminish, a hundred fold, the expense of formation.

The finest and most appropriate place to form a lake, is in the bottom of a small valley, rather broad in proportion to its length. The soil there will probably be found rather clayey and retentive of moisture; and the rill or brook, if not already running through it, could doubtless be easily diverted thither. There, by damming up the lower part of the valley with a head of greater or less height, the water may be thrown back so as to form the whole body of the lake.



The first subject which will demand the attention, after the spot has been selected for the lake or pond, and the height of the head and consequent depth of water determined upon, is the proposed form or outline of the whole. And, as we have already rejected all regular and geometric forms, in scenes where either natural or picturesque beauty is supposed to predominate, we must turn our attention to examples for imitation in another direction.

If, then, the improver will recur to the most beautiful small natural lake within his reach, he will have a subject to study and an example to copy well worthy of imitation. If he examine minutely and carefully such a body of water, with all its accompaniments, he will find that it is not only delightfully wooded and overshadowed by a variety of vegetation of all heights, from the low sedge that grows on its margin, to the tall tree that bends its branches over its limpid wave; but he will also perceive a striking peculiarity in its irregular outline. This, he will observe, is neither round, square, oblong, nor any modification of these regular figures, but full of bays and projections, sinuosities, and recesses of various forms and sizes, sometimes bold, and reaching a considerable way out into the body of the lake, at others, smaller and more varied in shape and connection. In the heights of the banks, too, he will probably observe considerable variety. At some places, the shore will steal gently and gradually away from the level of the water, while at others it will rise suddenly and abruptly, in banks more or less steep, irregular, and rugged.

Rocks and stones covered with mosses, will here and there jut out from the banks, or lie along the margin of the water, and the whole scene will be full of interest from the variety, intricacy, and beauty of the various parts. If he will accurately note in his mind all these varied forms—their separate outlines, the way in which they blend into one another, and connect themselves together, and the effect which, surrounding the water, they produce as a whole, he will have some tolerably correct ideas of the way in which an artificial lake ought to be formed.

Let him go still further now, in imagination, and suppose the banks of this natural lake, without being otherwise altered, entirely denuded of grass, shrubs, trees, and verdure of every description, remaining characterized only by their original form and outline; this will give him a more complete view of the method in which his labors must commence; for uncouth and apparently mis-shapen as those banks are and must be, when raw and unclothed, to exhibit all their variety and play of light and shadow when verdant and complete, so also must the original form of the banks and margin of the piece of artificial water, in order finally to assume the beautiful or picturesque, be made to assume outlines equally rough and harsh in their raw and incomplete state.

It occasionally happens, though rarely, that around the hollow or valley where it is proposed to form the piece of water, the ground rises in such irregular form, and is so undulating, receding, and projecting in various parts, that when the water is dammed up by the head below, the natural outline formed by the banks already existing, is sufficiently varied to produce a pleasing effect without much further preparatory labor. This, when it occurs, is exceedingly fortunate; but the examples are so unfrequent, that we must here make our suggestions upon a different supposition.

When, therefore, it is found that the form of the intended lake would not be such as is desirable, it must be made so by digging. In order to do this with any exactness the improver should take his stand at that part of the ground where the dam or head is to be formed, and raising his levelling instrument to the exact height to which the intended lake will rise, sweep round with his eye upon the surrounding sides of the valley, and indicate by placing marks there, the precise line to which the water will reach. This can easily be done throughout the whole circumference by a few changes of position.

When the outline is ascertained in this way, and marked out, the improver can, with the occasional aid of the leveller,

easily determine where and how he can make alterations and improvements. He will then excavate along the new margin, until he makes the water line (as shown by the instrument) penetrate to all the various bays, inlets, and curves of the proposed lake. In making these irregular variations, sometimes bold and striking, at others fainter and less perceptible, he can be guided, as we have already



FIG. 19. POND SHORE PLANTED WITH IRIS, ETC.

suggested, by no fixed rules, but such as he may deduce from the operations of nature on the same materials, or by imbuing his mind with the beauty of forms in graceful and refined art. In highly polished scenery, elegant curves and graceful sweeps should enter into the composition of the outline; but in wilder or more picturesque situations, more irregular and abrupt variations will be found most suitable and appropriate.

The intended water outline once fully traced and understood, the workmen can now proceed to form the banks. All this time the improver will keep in mind the supposed appearance of the bank of a natural lake stripped of its vegetation, etc., which will greatly assist him in his progress. In some places the banks will rise but little from the water; at others one or two feet, and at others perhaps three, four, or six times as much. This they will do, not in the same manner in all portions of the outline, sloping away with a like gradual rise on both sides, for this would inevitably produce tameness and monotony, but in an irregular and varied manner; sometimes falling back gradually, sometimes starting up perpendicularly, and again overhanging the bed of the lake itself.

All this can be easily effected while the excavations of those portions of the bed which require deepening are going on. And the better portions of the soil obtained from the latter, will serve to raise the banks when they are too low.

It is of but little consequence how roughly and irregularly the projections, elevations, etc., of the banks and outlines are at first made, so that some general form and connection is preserved. The danger lies on the other side, viz., in producing a whole too tame and insipid; for we have found by experience, how difficult it is to make the best workmen understand how to operate in any other way than in regular curves and straight lines. Besides, newly moved earth, by settling and the influence of rains, etc., tends, for some time, towards greater evenness and equality of surface.

In arranging these outlines and banks, we should study the effect at the points from which they will generally be viewed. Some pieces of water in valleys, are looked down upon from other and higher parts of the demesne; others (and this is most generally the case) are only seen from the adjoining walk, at some point or points where the latter approaches the lake. They are most generally seen from one, and seldom from more than two sides. When a lake is viewed from above, its contour should be studied as a

whole; but when it is only seen from one or more sides or points, the beauty of the view from those positions can often be greatly increased by some trifling alterations in arrangement. A piece of water which is long and comparatively narrow, appears extremely different in opposite points of view; if seen lengthwise from either extremity, its apparent breadth and extent is much increased; while, if the spectator be placed on one side and look across, it will seem narrow and insignificant. Now, although the form of an artificial lake of moderate size should never be much less in breadth than in length, yet the contrary is sometimes unavoidably the case; and being so, we should by all means avail ourselves of those well known laws in perspective, which will place them in the best possible position, relative to the spectator.

If the improver desire to render his banks still more picturesque, resembling the choicest features of natural banks, he should go a step further in arranging his materials before he introduces the water, or clothes the margin with vegetation. In analysing the finest portions of natural banks, it will be observed that their peculiar characteristics often depend on other objects besides the mere ground of the surrounding banks, and the trees and verdure with which they are clothed. These are, rocks of various size, forms, and colors, often projecting out of or holding up the bank in various places; stones sometimes imbedded in the soil, sometimes lying loosely along the shore; and lastly, old stumps of trees with gnarled roots, whose decaying hues are often extremely mellow and agreeable to the eye. All these have much to do with the expression of a truly picturesque bank, and cannot be excluded or taken away from it without detracting largely from its character. There is no reason, therefore, in an imitation of nature, why we should not make use of all her materials to produce a similar effect; and although in the raw and rude state of the banks at first, they may have a singular and rather crude aspect, stuck round and decorated here and there with large rocks, smaller stones, and old stumps of trees; yet it must be

remembered that this is only the chaotic state, from which the new creation is to emerge more perfectly formed and completed; and also that the appearance of these rocks and stumps, when covered with mosses, and partially overgrown with a profusion of luxuriant vegetation and climbing plants, will be as beautifully picturesque after a little time has elapsed, as it is now uncouth and uninviting.

*Islands* generally contribute greatly to the beauty of a piece of water. They serve, still further, to increase the variety of outline, and to break up the wide expanse of liquid into secondary portions, without injuring the effect of the whole. The striking contrast, too, between their verdure, the color of their margins, composed of variously tinted soils and stones, and the still, smooth water around them, — softened and blended as this contrast is, by their shadows reflected back from the limpid element, gives additional richness to the picture.

The distribution of islands in a lake or pond requires some judgment. They will always appear most natural when sufficiently near the shore, on either side, to maintain in appearance some connection with it. Although islands do sometimes occur near the middle of natural lakes, yet the effect is by no means good, as it not only breaks and distracts the effects of the whole expanse by dividing it into two distinct parts, but it always indicates a shallowness or want of depth where the water should be deepest.

There are two situations where it is universally admitted that islands may be happily introduced. These are, at the inlet and the exit of the body of water. In many cases where the stream which supplies the lake is not remarkable for size, and will add nothing to the appearance of the whole view from the usual points of sight, it may be concealed by an island or small group of islands, placed at some little distance in front of it. The head or dam of a lake, too, is often necessarily so formal and abrupt, that it is difficult to make it appear natural and in good keeping with the rest of the margin. The introduction of an island or two, placed near the main shore, on either side, and

projecting as far as possible before the dam, will greatly diminish this disagreeable formality, particularly if well clothed with a rich cover of shrubs and overhanging bushes.

Except in these two instances, islands should be generally placed opposite the salient points of the banks, or near those places where small breaks or promontories run out into the water. In such situations, they will increase the irregularity of the outline, and lend it additional spirit and animation. Should they, on the other hand, be seated in or near the marginal curve and indentations, they will only serve to clog up these recesses; and while their own figures are lost in these little bays where they are hidden, by lessening the already existing irregularities, they will render the whole outline tame and spiritless.\*

On one or two of these small islands, little rustic habitations, if it coincide with the taste of the proprietor, may be made for different aquatic birds or waterfowl, which will much enliven the scene by their fine plumage. Among these the swan is pre-eminent, for its beauty and gracefulness. Abroad, they are the almost constant accompaniments of water in the ground of country residences; and it cannot be denied that, floating about in the limpid wave, with their snow-white plumage and superbly curved necks, they are extremely elegant objects.

After having arranged the banks, reared up the islands, and completely formed the bed of the proposed lake, the improver will next proceed, at the proper period, to finish his labors by clothing the newly formed ground, in various parts, with vegetation. This may be done immediately, if it be desirable; or if the season be not favorable, it may be deferred until the banks, and all the newly formed earth, have had time to settle and assume their final forms, after the dam has been closed, and the whole basin filled to its intended height.

\* If one will consider for a moment the geologic forces by which islands are naturally formed, he will see that the suggestions given by Mr. Downing conform to the works of nature, and that they therefore assist toward a realization of the natural style. — F. A. W.

Planting the margins of pieces of water, if they should be of much extent, must evidently proceed upon the same leading principle that we have already laid down for ornamental plantations in other situations. That is, there must be trees of different heights and sizes, and underwood and shrubs of lower growth, disposed sometimes singly, at others in masses, groups, and thickets: in all of which forms, connection must be preserved, and the whole must be made to blend well together, while the different sizes and contours will prevent any sameness and confusion. On the retreating dry banks, the taller and more sturdy deciduous and evergreen trees, as the oak, ash, etc., may be planted, and nearer by, the different willows, the elm, the alder, and other trees that love a moister situation, will thrive well. It is indispensably necessary, in order to produce breadth of effect and strong rich contrasts, that underwood \* should be employed to clothe many parts of the banks. Without it, the stems of trees will appear loose and straggling, and the screen will be so imperfect as to allow a free passage for the vision in every direction. For this purpose, we have in all our woods, swamps, and along our brooks, an abundance of hazels, hawthorns, alders, spice woods, winter berries, azaleas, spireas, and a hundred other fine low shrubs, growing wild, which are by nature extremely well fitted for such sites, and will produce immediate effect on being transplanted. These may be intermingled, here and there, with the swamp button-bush which bears handsome white globular heads of blossoms, and the swamp magnolia, which is highly beautiful and fragrant. On cool north banks, among shelves of proper soil upheld by projecting ledges of rock, our native kalmias and rhododendrons, the common and mountain laurels, may be made to flourish. The Virginia creeper, and other beautiful wild vines, may be planted at the roots of some of the trees to clamber up their stems, and the wild clematis so placed that its luxuriant festoons shall hang gracefully from the

\* In modern American vernacular the old English term "underwood" would usually be translated "shrubs." — F. A. W.



projecting boughs of some of the overarching trees. Along the lower banks and closer margins, the growth of smaller plants will be encouraged, and various kinds of wild ferns may be so planted as partially to conceal, overrun, and hide the rocks and stumps of trees, while trailing plants, as the periwinkle and moneywort, will still further increase the intricacy and richness of such portions. In this way, the borders of the lake will resemble the finest portions of the banks of picturesque and beautiful natural dells and pieces of water, and the effect of the whole when time has given it the benefit of its softening touches, if it has been thus properly executed, will not be much inferior to those matchless bits of fine landscape. A more striking and artistical effect will be produced by substituting for native trees and shrubs, common on the banks of streams and lakes in the country, only rare foreign shrubs, vines, and aquatic plants of hardy growth, suitable for such situations.\* While these are arranged in the same manner as the former, from their comparative novelty, especially in such sites, they will at once convey the idea of refined and elegant art.

If any person will take the trouble to compare a piece of water so formed, when complete, with the square or circular sheets or ponds now in vogue among us, he must indeed be little gifted with an appreciation of the beautiful, if he do not at once perceive the surpassing merit of the natural style. In the old method, the banks, level, or rising on all sides, without any or but few surrounding trees, carefully gravelled along the edge of the water, or what is still worse, walled up, slope away in a tame, dull, uninteresting grass field. In the natural method, the outline is varied, sometimes receding from the eye, at others stealing out, and

\* This preference for rare exotics frequently evinced by Mr. Downing was highly characteristic of him, his time and his disciples. It is a curious fact that within 50 years his lineal descendants in the landscape gardening cult should have excommunicated all foreign species and required every plant to bring a certificate of American origin. But this is only one of the interesting deviations in the popular theory of the natural style, showing that the idea has always been more or less conventionalized. — F. A. W.

inviting the gaze — the banks here slope off gently with a gravelly beach, and there rise abruptly in different heights, abounding with hollows, projections, and eminences, showing various colored rocks and soils, intermingled with a luxuriant vegetation of all sizes and forms, corresponding to the different situations. Instead of allowing the sun to pour down in one blaze of light, without any objects to soften it with their shade, the thick overhanging groups and masses of trees cast, here and there, deep cool shadows. Stealing through the leaves and branches, the sun-beams quiver and play upon the surface of the flood, and are reflected back in dancing light, while their full glow upon the broader and more open portions of the lake is relieved, and brought into harmony by the cooler and softer tints mirrored in the water from the surrounding hues and tints of banks, rocks, and vegetation.

*Natural brooks and rivulets* may often be improved greatly by a few trifling alterations and additions, when they chance to come within the bounds of a country residence. Occasionally, they may be diverted from their original beds when they run through distant and unfrequented parts of the demesne, and brought through nearer portions of the pleasure grounds or lawn. This, however, can only be done with propriety when there is a natural indication in the grounds through which it is proposed to divert it — as a succession of hollows, etc., to form the future channel. Sometimes, a brisk little brook can be divided into smaller ones for some distance, again uniting at a point below, creating additional diversity by its varying form. The Abbe Dëlille has given us a fine image of a brook thus divided, in the following lines:

“Plus loin, il se sépare en deux ruisseaux agiles,  
Qui, se suivant l'un l'autre avec rapidité,  
Disputent de vitesse et de limpidité;  
Puis, rejoignant tous deux le lit qui les rassemble,  
Murmurent enchantés de voyager ensemble.  
Ainsi, toujours errant de détour en détour,  
Muet, bruyant, paisible, inquiet tour à tour,  
Sous mille aspects divers son cours se renouvelle.”

Brooks, rivulets, and even rills may frequently be greatly improved by altering the form of their beds in various places. Often by merely removing a few trifling obstructions, loose stones, branches, etc., or hollowing away the adjoining bank for a short distance, fine little expanses or pools of still water may be formed, which are happily contrasted with the more rugged course of the rest of the stream. Such improvements of these minor water courses are much preferable to widening them into flat, insipid, tame canals or rivers, which, though they present greater surface to the eye, are a thousand times inferior in the impetuosity of motion, and musical, "babbling sound," so delightful in rapid brooks and rivulets.

*Cascades and water-falls* are the most charming features of natural brooks and rivulets. Whatever may be their size they are always greatly admired, and in no way is the peculiar stillness of the air, peculiar to the country, more pleasingly broken, than by the melody of falling water. Even the gurgling and mellow sound of a small rill, leaping over a few fantastic stones, has a kind of lulling fascination for the ear, and when this sound can be brought so near as to be distinctly heard at the residence itself, it is peculiarly delightful. Now any one who examines a small cascade at all attentively, in a natural brook, will see that it is often formed in the simplest manner by the interposition of a few large projecting stones, which partially dam up the current and prevent the ready flow of the water. Such little cascades are easily imitated, by following exactly the same course, and damming up the little brook artificially; studiously avoiding, however, any formal and artificial disposition of the stones or rocks employed.

Larger water-falls and cascades cannot usually be made without some regular head or breastwork, to oppose more firmly the force of the current. Such heads may be formed of stout plank and well prepared clay; \* or, which is greatly

\* It is found that strong loam or any tenacious earth well prepared by puddling or beating in water is equally impervious to water as clay; and may therefore be used for lining the sides or dams of bodies of made water when such materials are required. — A. J. D.

preferable, of good masonry laid in water cement. After a head is thus formed it must be concealed entirely from the eye by covering it both upon the top and sides with natural rocks and stones of various sizes, so ingeniously disposed, as to appear fully to account for, or be the cause of the water-fall.

The axe of the original backwoodsman appears to have left such a mania for clearing behind it, even in those portions of the Atlantic states where such labor should be for ever silenced, that some of our finest places in the country will be found much desecrated and mutilated by its careless and unpardonable use; and not only are fine plantations often destroyed, but the banks of some of our finest streams and prettiest rivulets partially laid bare by the aid of this instrument, guided by some tasteless hand. Wherever fine brooks or water courses are thus mutilated, one of the most necessary and obvious improvements is to reclothe them with plantations of trees and underwood. In planting their banks anew, much beauty and variety can often be produced by employing different growths, and arranging them as we have directed for the margins of lakes and ponds. In some places where easy, beautiful slopes and undulations of ground border the streams, gravel, soft turf, and a few simple groups of trees, will be the most natural accompaniments; in others where the borders of the stream are broken into rougher, more rocky, and precipitous ridges, all the rich wildness and intricacy of low shrubs, ferns, creeping and climbing plants, may be brought in to advantage. Where the extent to be thus improved is considerable, the trouble may be lessened by planting the larger growth, and sowing the seeds of the smaller plants mingled together. Prepare the materials, and time and nature, with but little occasional assistance, will mature, and soften, and blend together the whole, in their own matchless and inimitable manner.

From all that we have suggested in these limited remarks, it will be seen that we would only attempt in our operations with water, the graceful or picturesque imitations of

natural lakes or ponds, and brooks, rivulets, and streams. Such are the only forms in which this unrivalled element can be displayed so as to harmonize agreeably with natural and picturesque scenery. In the latter, there can be no apology made for the introduction of straight canals, round or oblong pieces of water, and all the regular forms of the geometric mode; because they would evidently be in violent opposition to the whole character and expression of natural landscape. In architectural, or flower gardens (on which we shall hereafter have occasion to offer some remarks), where a different and highly artificial arrangement prevails, all these regular forms, with various jets, fountains, etc., may be employed with good taste, and will combine well with the other accessories of such places. But in the grounds of a residence in the modern style, nature, if possible, still more purified, as in the great masterpieces of art, by an ideal standard, should be the great aim of the Landscape Gardener. And with water especially, only beautiful when allowed to take its own flowing forms and graceful motions, more than with any other of our materials, all appearance of constraint and formality should be avoided. If art be at all manifest, it should discover itself only, as in the admirably painted landscape, in the reproduction of nature in her choicest developments. Indeed, many of the most celebrated authors who have treated of this subject, appear to agree that the productions of the artist in this branch are most perfect as they approach most nearly to fac-similes of nature herself: and though art should have formed the whole, its employment must be nowhere discovered by the spectator; or as Tasso has more elegantly expressed the idea:

“L'Arte che tutto fa, nulla si scopre.”

## CHAPTER VI

### *EMBELLISHMENTS*

Nature, assuming a more lovely face,  
Borrowing a beauty from the works of grace.

COWPER.

——— Each odorous bushy shrub  
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower;  
Iris all hues, Roses and Jessamine  
Rear'd high their flourished heads between,  
And wrought Mosaic.

MILTON.

**I**N our finest places, or those country seats where much of the polish of pleasure ground or park scenery is kept up, one of the most striking defects is the want of union between the house and the grounds. We are well aware that from the comparative rarity of anything like a highly kept place in this country, the want of this, which is indeed like the last finish to the residence, is scarcely felt at all. But this only proves the infant state of Landscape Gardening here, and the little attention that has been paid to the highest details of the art.

If our readers will imagine, with us, a pretty villa, conveniently arranged and well constructed, in short, complete in itself as regards its architecture, and at the same time, properly placed in a smooth well kept lawn, studded with groups and masses of fine trees, they will have an example often to be met with, of a place, in the graceful school of design, about which, however, there is felt to be a certain incongruity between the house, a highly artificial object, and the surrounding grounds, where the prevailing expression in the latter is that of beautiful nature.

Let us suppose, for further illustration, the same house and grounds with a few additions. The house now rising directly out of the green turf which encompasses it, we

will surround by a raised platform or terrace, wide enough for a dry, firm walk, at all seasons; on the top of the wall or border of this terrace, we will form a handsome parapet, or balustrade, some two or three feet high, the details of which shall be in good keeping with the house, whether Grecian or Gothic. On the coping of this parapet, if the house is in the classical style, we will find suitable places, at proper intervals, for some handsome urns, vases, etc. On the drawing-room side of the house, that is, the side towards which the best room or rooms look, we will place the flower-garden, into which we descend from the terrace by a few steps. This flower-garden may be simply what its name denotes, a place exclusively devoted to the cultivation of flowers, or (if the house is not in a very plain style, admitting of little enrichment) it may be an architectural flower-garden. In the latter case, intermingled with the flowers, are to be seen vases, fountains, and sometimes even statues; the effect of the fine colors and deep foliage of the former, heightened by contrast with the sculptured forms of the latter.

If our readers will now step back a few rods with us and take a second view of our villa residence, with its supposed harmonizing accessories, we think they can hardly fail to be impressed at once with the great improvement of the whole. The eye now, instead of witnessing the sudden termination of the architecture at the base of the house, where the lawn commences as suddenly, will be at once struck with the increased variety and richness imparted to the whole scene, by the addition of the architectural and garden decorations. The mind is led gradually down from the house, with its projecting porch or piazzas, to the surrounding terrace crowned with its beautiful vases, and from thence to the architectural flower-garden, interspersed with similar ornaments. The various play of light afforded by these sculptured forms on the terrace; the projections and recesses of the parapet, with here and there some climbing plants luxuriantly enwreathing it, throwing out the mural objects in stronger relief, and connecting them pleasantly

with the verdure of the turf beneath; the still further rambling off of vases, etc., into the brilliant flower-garden, which, through these ornaments, maintains an avowed connection with the architecture of the house; all this, we think it cannot be denied, forms a rich setting to the architecture, and unites agreeably the forms of surrounding nature with the more regular and uniform outlines of the building.

The effect will not be less pleasing if viewed from another point of view, viz., the terrace, or from the apartments of the house itself. From either of these points, the various objects enumerated, will form a rich foreground to the pleasure-grounds, or park—a matter which painters well know how to estimate, as a landscape is incomplete and unsatisfactory to them, however beautiful the middle or distant points, unless there are some strongly marked objects in the foreground. In fine, the intervention of these elegant accompaniments to our houses prevents us, as Mr. Hope has observed, “from launching at once from the threshold of the symmetric mansion, in the most abrupt manner, into a scene wholly composed of the most unsymmetric and desultory forms of mere nature, which are totally out of character with the mansion, whatever may be its style of architecture and furnishing.” \*

The highly decorated terrace, as we have here supposed it, would, it is evident, be in unison with villas of a somewhat superior style; or, in other words, the amount of enrichment bestowed upon exterior decoration near the house, should correspond to the style of art evinced in the exterior of the mansion itself. An humble cottage with sculptured vases on its terrace and parapet, would be in bad taste; but any Grecian, Roman, or Italian villa, where a moderate degree of exterior ornament is visible, or a Gothic villa of the better class, will allow the additional enrichment of the architectural terrace and its ornaments. Indeed the terrace itself, in so far as it denotes a raised dry platform around the house, is a suitable and appropriate appendage to every dwelling, of whatever class.

\* Essay on Ornamental Gardening, by Thomas Hope.



The width of a terrace around a house may vary from five to twenty feet, or more, in proportion as the building is of greater or less importance. The surrounding wall, which supports its level, may also vary from one to eight feet. The terrace, in the better class of English residences, is paved with smooth flag stones, or in place of this, a surface of firm well-rolled gravel is substituted. In residences where a parapet or balustrade would be thought too expensive, a square stone or plinth is placed at the angles or four corners of the terrace, which serves as the pedestal for a vase or urn. When a more elegant and finished appearance is desirable, the parapet formed of open work of stone, or wood painted in imitation of stone, rises above the level of the terrace two or three feet with a suitably bold coping. On this vases may be placed, not only at the corners, but at regular intervals of ten, twenty, or more feet. We have alluded to the good effect of climbers, here and there planted, and suffered to intermingle their rich foliage with the open work of the parapet and its crowning ornaments. In the climate of Philadelphia, the Giant Ivy, with its thick sculpturesque looking masses of foliage, would be admirably suited to this purpose. Or the Virginia creeper (the ivy of America) may take its place in any other portion of the Union. To these we may add, the Chinese twining honeysuckle and the Sweet-scented Clematis, both deliciously fragrant in their blossoms, with many other fine climbers which will readily recur to the amateur.

There can be no reason why the smallest cottage, if its occupant be a person of taste should not have a terrace decorated in a suitable manner.\* This is easily and cheaply effected by placing neat flower-pots on the parapet, or

\* Modern American taste, as expressed by leading architects, would not insist so strongly on terraces for every house. Indeed, such terraces are to be seen on only a small minority of the popular residences of the present, and their lack in the majority is not felt as a defect. Rather have the modern architects and landscape architects been able to adapt the residence to the ground most effectively by other means, especially by *foundation plantings*, an expedient apparently little minded by Mr. Downing. — F. A. W.

border and angles of the terrace, with suitable plants growing in them.

Where there is a terrace ornamented with urns or vases, and the proprietor wishes to give a corresponding air of elegance to his grounds, vases, sundials, etc., may be placed in various appropriate situations, not only in the architectural flower-garden, but on the lawn, and through the pleasure-grounds in various different points near the house. We say near the house, because we think so highly artificial and architectural an object as a sculptured vase, is never correctly introduced unless it appear in some way connected with buildings, or objects of a like architectural character. To place a beautiful vase in a distant part of the grounds, where there is no direct allusion to art, and where it is accompanied only by natural objects, as the overhanging trees and the sloping turf, is in a measure doing violence to our reason or taste, by bringing two objects so strongly contrasted, in direct union. But when we see a statue or a vase placed in any part of the grounds where a near view is obtained of the house (and its accompanying statues or vases), the whole is accounted for, and we feel the distant vase to be only a part of, or rather a repetition of the same idea, — in other words, that it forms part of a whole, harmonious and consistent.

Vases of real stone, as marble or granite, are decorations of too costly a kind ever to come into general use among us. Vases, however, of equally beautiful forms, are manufactured of artificial stone, of fine pottery, or of cast iron, which have the same effect, and are of nearly equal durability, as garden decorations.

A vase should never, in the open air, be set down upon the ground or grass, without being placed upon a firm base of some description, either a plinth or a pedestal. Without a base of this kind it has a temporary look, as if it had been left there by mere accident, and without any intention of permanence. Placing it upon a pedestal, or square plinth (block of stone), gives it a character of art, at once more dignified and expressive of stability. Besides this, the

pedestal in reality serves to preserve the vase in a perpendicular position, as well as to expose it fairly to the eye, which could not be the case were it put down, without any preparation, on the bare turf or gravel.

Large vases are sometimes filled with earth and planted with choice flowering plants, and the effect of the blossoms and green leaves growing out of these handsome receptacles, is at least unique and striking. Loudon objects to it in the case of an elegant sculptured vase, "because it is reducing a work of art to the level of a mere garden flower-pot, and dividing the attention between the beauty of the form of the vase and of its sculptured ornaments, and that of the plant which it contains." This criticism is a just one in its general application, especially when vases are considered as architectural decorations. Occasional deviations, however, may be permitted, for the sake of producing variety, especially in the case of vases used as decorations in the flower-garden.

A very pretty and fanciful substitute for the sculptured vase, and which may take its place in the picturesque landscape, may be found in vases or baskets of rustic work, constructed of the branches and sections of trees with the bark attached.\* Figure 20 is a representation of a pleasing rustic vase which we have constructed without difficulty. A tripod of branches of trees forms the pedestal. An octagonal box serves as the body or frame of the vase; on this, pieces of birch and hazel (small split limbs covered with the bark) are nailed closely, so as to form a sort of mosaic covering to the whole exterior. Ornaments of this kind, which may be made by the amateur with the assistance of a common carpenter, are very suitable for the decoration of the grounds and flower-gardens of cottages or pictur-



FIG. 20. RUSTIC  
VASE

\* Reference has already been made to the vogue of this "rustic" work in Mr. Downing's time and to its happy disappearance from the gardens of our own days. — F. A. W.

esque villas. An endless variety of forms will occur to an ingenious artist in rustic work, which he may call in to the embellishment of rural scenes, without taxing his purse heavily.

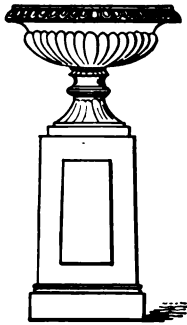


FIG. 21. GRECIAN VASE



FIG. 22. GRECIAN VASE

Sundials are among the oldest decorations for the garden and grounds, and there are scarcely any which we think more suitable. They are not merely decorative, but have also an useful character, and may therefore be occasionally

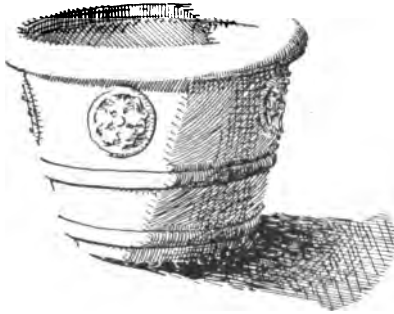


FIG. 23. MODERN VASE IN TERRA COTTA

placed in distant parts of the grounds, should a favorite walk terminate there. When we meet daily in our walks for a number of years, with one of these silent monitors of the flight of time, we become in a degree attached to it, and

really look upon it as gifted with a species of intelligence, beaming out when the sunbeams smile upon its dial-plate.

The architectural flower-garden, as we have just remarked, has generally a direct connection with the house, at least on one side by the terrace. It may be of greater or less size, from twenty feet square to half an acre in extent. The leading characteristics of this species of flower-garden, are the regular lines and forms employed in its beds and walks. The flowers are generally planted in beds in the form of circles, octagons, squares, etc., the center of the garden being occupied by an elegant vase, a sundial, or that still finer ornament, a fountain. In various parts of the garden, along the principal walks, or in the center of parterres, pedestals supporting vases, urns, or handsome flower-pots with plants, are placed. When a highly marked character of art is intended, a balustrade or parapet, resembling that of the terrace to which it is connected, is continued round the whole of this garden. Or in other cases the garden is surrounded by a thicket of shrubs and low trees, partly concealing it from the eye on all sides but one.

It is evident that the architectural flower-garden is superior to the general flower-garden, as an appendage to the house, on two accounts. First, because as we have already shown, it serves an admirable purpose in effecting a harmonious union between the house and the grounds. And secondly, because we have both the rich verdure and gay blossoms of the flowering plants, and the more permanent beauty of sculptured forms; the latter heightening the effect of the former by contrast, as well as by the relief they afford the eye in masses of light, amid surrounding verdure.

There are several varieties of general flower-gardens, which may be formed near the house. Among these we will only notice the *irregular* flower-garden, the *old French* flower-garden, and the *modern* or *English* flower-garden.

In almost all the different kinds of flower-gardens, two methods of forming the beds are observed. One is, to cut the beds out of the green turf, which is ever afterwards kept

well-mown or cut for the walks, and the edges pared; the other, to surround the beds with edgings of verdure, as box, etc., or some more durable material, as tiles, or cut stone, the walks between being covered with gravel. The turf is certainly the most agreeable for walking upon in the heat of summer, and the dry part of the day; while the gravelled flower-garden affords a dry footing at nearly all hours and seasons.



FIG. 24. THE GARDEN SUN DIAL

The *irregular* flower-garden \* is surrounded by an irregular belt of trees and ornamental shrubs of the choicest species, and the beds are varied in outline, as well as irregularly disposed, sometimes grouping together, sometimes standing singly, but exhibiting no uniformity of arrangement.

This kind of flower-garden would be a suitable accompaniment to the house and grounds of an enthusiastic lover of the picturesque, whose residence is in the Rural Gothic style, and whose grounds are also eminently varied and picturesque. Or it might form a pretty termination to a

\* This style of flower garden has gone completely out of fashion in America.—F. A. W.

distant walk in the pleasure-grounds, where it would be more necessary that the flower-garden should be in keeping with the surrounding plantations and scenery than with the house.

Where the flower-garden is a spot set apart, of any regular outline, not of large size, and especially where it is attached directly to the house, we think the effect is most satisfactory when the beds or walks are laid out in symmetrical forms. Our reasons for this are these: the flower-garden, unlike distant portions of the pleasure-ground scenery, is an appendage to the house, seen in the same view or moment with it, and therefore should exhibit something of the regularity which characterizes, in a greater or less degree, all architectural compositions; and when a given scene is so small as to be embraced in a single glance of the eye, regular forms are found to be more satisfactory than irregular ones, which, on so small a scale, are apt to appear unmeaning.

The *French* flower-garden is the most fanciful of the usual modes of laying out the area devoted to this purpose. The patterns or figures employed are often highly intricate, and require considerable skill in their formation. The walks are either of gravel or smoothly shaven turf, and the beds are filled with choice flowering plants. It is evident that much of the beauty of this kind of flower-garden, or indeed any other where the figures are regular and intricate, must depend on the outlines of the beds, or parterres of embroidery, as they are called, being kept distinct and clear. To do this effectually, low growing herbaceous plants or border flowers, perennials and annuals, should be chosen, such as will not exceed on an average, one or two feet in height.

In the *English* flower-garden, the beds are either in symmetrical forms and figures, or they are characterized by irregular curved outlines. The peculiarity of these gardens, at present so fashionable in England, is, that each separate bed is planted with a single variety, or at most two varieties of flowers. Only the most striking and showy varieties are generally chosen, and the effect, when the selec-

tion is judicious, is highly brilliant. Each bed, in its season, presents a mass of blossoms, and the contrast of rich colors is much more striking than in any other arrangement. No plants are admitted that are shy bloomers, or which have ugly habits of growth, meagre or starved foliage; the aim being brilliant effect, rather than the display of a great variety of curious or rare plants. To bring this about more



FIG. 25. A BIRD BATH AS A GARDEN ORNAMENT

perfectly, and to have an elegant show during the whole season of growth, hyacinths and other fine bulbous roots occupy a certain portion of the beds, the intervals being filled with handsome herbaceous plants, permanently planted, or with flowering annuals and green-house plants renewed every season.

To illustrate the mode of arranging the beds and disposing the plants in an English garden, we copy the description of the elegant flower-garden, on the lawn at Dropmore, the beds being cut out of the smooth turf.

“As a general principle for regulating the plants in this figure, the winter and spring flowers ought, as much as possible, to be of sorts which admit of being



in the ground all the year: and the summer crop should be planted at intervals between the winter plants. Or the summer crop, having been brought forward in pots under glass, or by nightly protection, may be planted out about the middle of June, after the winter plants in pots are removed. A number of hardy bulbs ought to be potted and plunged in the beds in the months of October and November; and when out of bloom, in May or June, removed to the reserve garden and plunged there, in order to perfect their foliage and mature their bulbs for the succeeding season."

There cannot be a question that this method of planting the flower-garden in groups and masses, is productive of by far the most splendid effect. In England, where flower-gardens are carried to their greatest perfection, the preference in planting is given to exotics which blossom constantly throughout the season, and which are kept in the greenhouse during winter, and turned out in the beds in the early part of the season, where they flower in the greatest profusion until frost; as fuchsias, salvias, lobelias, scarlet geraniums, etc., etc.\* This mode can be adopted here where a small green-house or frame is kept. In the absence of these, nearly the same effect may be produced by choosing the most showy herbaceous plants, perennial and biennial, alternating them with hardy bulbs, and the finer species of annuals.

Where the proprietor of a country residence, or the ladies of a family, have a particular taste, it may be indulged at

\* In many English residences, the flower-garden is maintained in never-fading brilliancy by almost daily supplies from what is termed the *reserve garden*. This is a small garden out of sight, in which a great number of duplicates of the species in the flower-garden are grown in pots plunged in beds. As soon as a vacuum is made in the flower-garden by the fading of any flowers, the same are immediately removed and their places supplied by fresh plants just ready to bloom, from the pots in the reserve garden. This, which is the ultimatum of refinement in flower-gardening, has never, to our knowledge, been attempted in this country. — A. J. D. This use of the reserve garden is probably as common in America today as in England. — F. A. W.

pleasure in other and different varieties of the flower-garden. With some families there is a taste for botany, when a small botanic flower-garden may be preferred — the herbaceous and other plants being grouped or massed in beds after the Linnæan, or the natural method. Some persons have an enthusiastic fondness for florist flowers, as pansies, carnations, dahlias, roses, etc.; others for bulbous plants, all of which may very properly lead to particular modes of laying out flower-gardens.



FIG. 26. GARDEN SEAT

The desideratum, however, with most persons is, to have a continued display of blossoms in the flower-garden from the opening of the crocus and snowdrop in the spring, until the autumnal frosts cut off the last pale asters, or blacken the stems of the luxuriant dahlias in November. This may be done with a very small catalogue of plants if they are properly selected: such as flower at different seasons, continue long time in bloom, and present fine masses of flowers. On the other hand, a very large number of species may be assembled together; and owing to their being merely botanical rarities, and not bearing fine flowers, or to their blossoming chiefly in a certain portion of the season, or continuing but a short period in bloom, the flower-garden will often have but an insignificant appearance. With a group of pansies and spring bulbs, a bed of ever-blooming China roses, some few eschscholtzias, the showy petunias, gillias,

and other annuals, and a dozen choice double dahlias, and some trailing verbenas, a limited spot, of a few yards in diameter, may be made productive of more enjoyment, so far as regards a continued display of flowers, than ten times that space, planted, as we often see flower-gardens here, with a heterogeneous mixture of everything the possessor can lay his hands on, or crowd within the inclosure.

The *mingled* flower-garden, as it is termed, is by far the most common mode of arrangement in this country, though it is seldom well effected. The object in this is to dispose the plants in the beds in such a manner, that while there is no predominance of bloom in any one portion of the beds there shall be a general admixture of colors and blossoms throughout the entire garden during the whole season of growth.

To promote this, the more showy plants should be often repeated in different parts of the garden, or even the same parterre when large, the less beautiful sorts being suffered to occupy but moderate space. The smallest plants should be nearest the walk, those a little taller behind them, and the largest should be furthest from the eye, at the back of the border, when the latter is seen from one side only, or in the centre, if the bed be viewed from both sides. A neglect of this simple rule will not only give the beds, when the plants are full grown, a confused look, but the beauty of the humbler and more delicate plants will be lost amid the tall thick branches of sturdier plants, or removed so far from the spectator in the walks, as to be overlooked.

Considerable experience is necessary to arrange even a moderate number of plants in accordance with these rules. To perform it successfully, some knowledge of the habits of the plants is an important requisite; their height, time of flowering, and the colors of their blossoms. When a gardener, or an amateur, is perfectly informed on these points, he can take a given number of plants of different species, make a plan of the bed or all the beds of a flower garden upon paper, and designate the particular situation of each species.

The *shrubbery* is so generally situated in the neighborhood of the flower-garden and the house, that we shall here offer a few remarks on its arrangement and distribution.

A collection of flowering shrubs is so ornamental, that to a greater or less extent it is to be found in almost every residence of the most moderate size: the manner in which the shrubs are disposed, must necessarily depend in a great degree upon the size of the grounds, the use or enjoyment to be derived from them, and the prevailing character of the scenery.

It is evident, on a moment's reflection, that shrubs being intrinsically more ornamental than trees, on account of the beauty and abundance of their flowers, they will generally be placed near and about the house, in order that their gay blossoms and fine fragrance may be more constantly enjoyed, than if they were scattered indiscriminately over the grounds.



FIG. 27. GARDEN GATE AND ROSE TRELLIS

Where a place is limited in size, and the whole lawn and plantations partake of the pleasure-ground character, shrubs of all descriptions may be grouped with good effect, in the same manner as trees, throughout the grounds; the finer and rarer species being disposed about the dwelling,

and the more hardy and common sorts along the walks, and in groups, in different situations near the eye.

When, however, the residence is of larger size, and the grounds have a park-like extent and character, the introduction of shrubs might interfere with the noble and dignified expression of lofty full grown trees, except perhaps they were planted here and there, among large groups, as under-wood; or if cattle or sheep were allowed to graze in the park, it would of course be impossible to preserve plantations of shrubs there. When this is the case, however, a portion near the house is divided from the park (by a wire fence or some inconspicuous barrier) for the pleasure-ground, where the shrubs are disposed in belts, groups, etc., as in the first case alluded to.

There are two methods of grouping shrubs upon lawns which may separately be considered, in combination with beautiful and picturesque scenery.

In the first case, where the character of the scene, of the plantations of trees, etc., is that of polished beauty, the belts of shrubs may be arranged similar to herbaceous flowering plants, in arabesque beds, along the walks. In this case, the shrubs alone, arranged with relation to their height, may occupy the beds; or if preferred, shrubs and flowers may be intermingled.

Where picturesque effect is the object aimed at in the pleasure-grounds, it may be attained in another way; that is, by planting irregular groups of the most vigorous and thrifty growing shrubs in lawn, without placing them in regular dug beds or belts; but instead of this, keeping the grass from growing and the soil somewhat loose, for a few inches round their stems (which will not be apparent at a short distance). In the case of many of the hardier shrubs, after they become well established, even this care will not be requisite, and the grass only will require to be kept short by clipping it when the lawn is mown.

As in picturesque scenes everything depends upon grouping well, it will be found that shrubs may be employed with excellent effect in connecting single trees, or finishing

a group composed of large trees, or giving fulness to groups of tall trees newly planted on a lawn, or effecting a union between buildings and ground. It is true that it requires something of an artist's feeling and perception of the picturesque to do these successfully, but the result is so much the more pleasing and satisfactory when it is well executed.

When walks are continued from the house through distant parts of the pleasure-grounds, groups of shrubs may be planted along their margins, here and there, with excellent effect. They do not shut out or obstruct the view like large trees, while they impart an interest to an otherwise tame and spiritless walk. Placed in the projecting bay, round which the walk curves so as to appear to be a reason for its taking that direction, they conceal also the portion of the walk in advance, and thus enhance the interest doubly. The neighborhood of rustic seats, or resting points, are also fit places for the assemblage of a group or groups of shrubs.

For the use of those who require some guide in the selection of species, we subjoin the accompanying list of hardy and showy shrubs, which are at the same time easily procured in the United States.\* A great number of additional species and varieties, and many more rare, might be enumerated, but such will be sufficiently familiar to the connoisseur already; and what we have said respecting botanical rarities in flowering plants may be applied with equal force to shrubs, viz. that in order to produce a brilliant effect, a few well chosen species, often repeated, are more effective than a great and ill-assorted *melange*.

In the following list, the shrubs are divided into two classes — No. 1 designating those of medium size, or low growth, and No. 2, those which are of the largest size.

\* The reader may fairly be reminded that Mr. Downing was a most competent plantsman. Though longer experience and later introductions have considerably changed the nurserymen's lists, this catalog of plants will still be useful and interesting. — F. A. W.

FLOWERING IN APRIL

1. *Daphne mezereum*, the Pink Mezereum, *D. M. album*, the white Mezereum.
2. *Shepherdia argentea*, the Buffalo berry; yellow.
1. *Xanthorhiza apiifolia*, the parsley-leaved Yellow-root; brown.
1. *Cydonia japonica*, the Japan Quince; scarlet.
1. *Cydonia japonica alba*, the Japan Quince; white.
2. *Amelanchier Botryapium*, the snowy Medlar.
1. *Ribes aureum*, the Missouri Currant; yellow.
1. *Coronilla Emerus*, the Scorpion Senna; yellow.
2. *Magnolia conspicua*, the Chinese chandelier Magnolia; white.

MAY

2. *Crategus oxycantha*, the scarlet Hawthorn.
2. *Crategus oxycantha*, *fl. pleno*, the double white Hawthorn.
2. *Chionanthus virginica*, the white Fringe tree.
1. *Chionanthus latifolius*, the broad-leaved Fringe tree; white.
1. *Azalea*, many fine varieties; red, white, and yellow.
1. *Calycanthus florida*, the Sweet-scented-shrub; brown.
1. *Magnolia purpurea*, the Chinese purple Magnolia.
2. *Halesia tetraptera*, the silver Bell tree; white.
2. *Syringa vulgaris*, the common white and red Lilacs.
1. *Syringa persica*, the Persian Lilac; white and purple.
1. *Syringa persica laciniata*, the Persian cut-leaved Lilac; purple.
1. *Kerria japonica*, the Japan Globe flower, yellow.
1. *Lonicera tartarica*, the Tartarian upright Honeysuckles; red and white.
1. *Philadelphus coronarius*, the common Syringo, and the double Syringo; white.
1. *Spiræa hypericifolia*, the St. Stephen's wreath; white.
1. *Spiræa corymbosa*, the cluster flowering Spirea; white.
1. *Ribes sanguineum*, the scarlet flowering Currant.
1. *Prunus nana*, the double dwarf Almond; pink.
1. *Caragana arborescens*, the Siberian Pea tree; yellow.
2. *Magnolia soulangeana*, the Soulange Magnolia; purple.
1. *Pæonia moutan banksia*, and *rosea*, the Chinese tree Pænoia; purple.
1. *Benthamia frugifera*, the red berried Benthamia; yellow.

JUNE

1. *Amorpha fruticosa*, the Indigo Shrub; purple.
2. *Colutea arborescens*, the yellow Bladder-senna.
1. *Colutea cruenta*, the red Bladder-senna.
1. *Cytisus capitatus*, the cluster-flowered Cytisus; yellow.

1. *Stuartia virginica*, the white Stuartia.
1. *Cornus sanguinea*, the bloody twig Dogwood; white.
1. *Hydrangea quercifolia*, the oak-leaved Hydrangea; white.
2. *Philadelphus grandiflorus*, the large flowering Syringo; white.
2. *Viburnum Opulus*, the Snow-ball; white.
2. *Magnolia glauca*, the swamp Magnolia; white.
1. *Robinia hispida*, the Rose-acacia.

## JULY

1. *Spiræa bella*, the beautiful Spirea; red.
2. *Sophora japonica*, the Japan Sophora; white.
2. *Sophora japonica pendula*, the weeping Sophora; white.
2. *Rhus Cotinus*, the Venetian Fringe tree; yellow. (Brown tufts.)
1. *Ligustrum vulgare*, the common Privet; white.
2. *Cytisus Laburnum*, the Laburnum; yellow.
2. *Cytisus L. quercifolia*, the oak-leaved Laburnum; white.
1. *Cytisus purpureus*, the purple Laburnum.
1. *Cytisus argenteus*, the silvery Cytisus; yellow.
1. *Cytisus nigricans*, the black rooted Cytisus; yellow.
2. *Kolreuteria paniculata*, the Japan Kolreuteria; yellow.

## AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

1. *Clethra alnifolia*, the alder-leaved Clethra; white.
1. *Symphoricarpos racemosa*, the Snowberry; (in fruit) white.
2. *Hibiscus syriacus*, the double purple, double white, double striped double blue, and variegated leaved Altheas.
1. *Spiræa tomentosa*, the tomentose Spirea; red.
2. *Magnolia glauca thompsoniana*, the late flowering Magnolia; white.
1. *Baccharis halmifolia*, the Groundsel tree; white tufts.
2. *Euonymus europæus*, the European Strawberry tree. (in fruit), red.
2. *Euonymus europæus alba*, the European Strawberry tree; the fruit white.
2. *Euonymus latifolius*, the broad-leaved Strawberry tree; red.
1. *Daphne mezereum autumnalis*, the autumnal Mezereum.

Besides the above, there are a great number of charming varieties of hardy roses, some of which may be grown in the common way on their own roots, and others grafted on stocks, two, three, or four feet high, as standards or tree-roses. The effect of the latter is wonderfully brilliant when they are in full bloom. Perhaps the situation where they are displayed to the greatest advantage is, in the center of



small round, oval, or square beds in the flower-garden where the remainder of the plants composing the bed are of dwarfish growth, so as not to hide the stem and head of the tree-roses.

There are, unfortunately, but few evergreen shrubs that will endure the protracted cold of the winters of the northern states. The fine hollies, Portugal laurels, laurustinuses, etc., which are the glory of English gardens in autumn and winter, are not hardy enough to endure the depressed temperature of ten degrees below zero. South of Philadelphia, these beautiful exotic evergreens may be acclimated with good success, and will add greatly to the interest of the shrubbery and grounds in winter.

Beside the balsam firs and the spruce firs, the arbor vitæ, and other evergreen trees, the following hardy species of evergreen shrubs may be introduced with advantage in the pleasure ground groups, viz: —

*Rhododendron maximum*, the American rose bay or big Laurel; white and pink, several varieties (in shaded places).

*Kalmia latifolia*, the common Laurel; several colors.

*Juniperus communis suecia*, the Swedish Juniper.

*Juniperus communis hibernia*, the Irish Juniper.

*Buxus arborescens*, the common Tree-box, the Gold striped Tree-box, and the Silver striped Tree-box.

*Ilex opaca*, the American Holly.

*Crategus pyracantha*, the Evergreen Thorn.

*Mahonia aquifolium*, the Holly leaved Barberry.

The *Conservatory* or the greenhouse is an elegant and delightful appendage to the villa or mansion, when there is a taste for plants among the different members of a family. Those who have not enjoyed it, can hardly imagine the pleasure afforded by a well-chosen collection of exotic plants, which, amid the genial warmth of an artificial climate, continue to put forth their lovely blossoms, and exhale their delicious perfumes, when all out-of-door nature is chill and desolate. The many hours of pleasant and healthy exercise and recreation afforded to the ladies of a family, where they take an interest themselves in the

growth and vigor of the plants, are certainly no trifling considerations where the country residence is the place of habitation throughout the whole year. Often during the inclemency of our winter and spring months, there are days when either the excessive cold, or the disagreeable state of the weather, prevents in a great measure many persons, and especially females, from taking exercise in the open air. To such, the conservatory would be an almost endless source of enjoyment and amusement; and if they are true amateurs, of active exertion also. The constant changes which daily growth and development bring about in vegetable forms, the interest we feel in the opening of a favorite cluster of buds, or the progress of the thrifty and luxuriant shoots of a rare plant, are such as serve most effectually to prevent an occupation of this nature from ever becoming monotonous.

The difference between the greenhouse and conservatory is, that in the former, the plants are all kept in pots and arranged on stages, both to meet the eye agreeably, and for more convenient growth; while in the conservatory, the plants are grown in a bed or border of soil precisely as in the open air.

When either of these plant habitations is to be attached to the house, the preference is greatly in favor of the conservatory. The plants being allowed more room, have richer and more luxuriant foliage, and grow and flower in a manner altogether superior to those in pots. The allusion to nature is also more complete in the case of plants growing in the ground; and from the objects all being on the same level, and easily accessible, they are with more facility kept in that perfect nicety and order which an elegant plant-house should always exhibit.

On the other hand, the greenhouse will contain by far the largest number of plants, and the same may be more easily changed or renewed at any time; so that for a particular taste, as that of a botanical amateur, who wishes to grow a great number of species in a small space, the greenhouse will be found preferable. Whenever either the

conservatory or greenhouse is of moderate size, and intended solely for private recreation, we would in every case, when such a thing is not impossible, have it attached to the house; communicating by a glass door with the drawing-room, or one of the living rooms. Nothing can be more gratifying than a vista in winter through a glass door down the walk of a conservatory, bordered and overhung with the fine forms of tropical vegetation, golden oranges glowing through the dark green foliage, and gay corollas lighting up the branches of Camellias and other floral favorites. Let us add the exulting song of a few Canaries, and the enchantment is complete. How much more refined and elevated is the taste which prefers such accessories to a dwelling, rather than costly furniture, or an extravagant display of plate!

The best and most economical form for a conservatory is a parallelogram — the deviation from a square being greater or less according to circumstances. When it is joined to the dwelling by one of its sides (in the case of the parallelogram form), the roof need only slope in one way, that is from the house. When one of the ends of the conservatory joins the dwelling, the roof should slope both ways from the center. The advantage of the junction in the former case, is, that less outer surface of the conservatory being exposed to the cold, viz. only a side and two ends, less fuel will be required; the advantage in the latter case is, that the main walk leading down the conservatory will be exactly in the line of the vista from the drawing-room of the dwelling.

It is, we hope, almost unnecessary to state, that the roof of a conservatory, or indeed any other house where plants are to be well-grown, must be glazed. Opaque roofs prevent the admission of perpendicular light, without which the stems of vegetation are drawn up weak and feeble, and are attracted in an unsightly manner towards the glass in front. When the conservatory joins the house by one of its ends, and extends out from the building to a considerable length, the effect will be much more elegant; and the plants will

thrive more perfectly, when it is glazed on all of the three sides, so as to admit light in every direction.\*

The best aspect for a conservatory is directly south; southeast and southwest are scarcely inferior. Even east and west exposures will do very well, where there is plenty of glass to admit light; for though our winters are cold, yet there is a great abundance of sun, and bright clear atmosphere, both far more beneficial to plants than the moist, foggy vapor of an English winter, which, though mild, is comparatively sunless. When the conservatory adjoins and looks into the flower-garden, the effect will be appropriate and pleasing.

Some few hints respecting the construction of a conservatory may not be unacceptable to some of our readers. In the first place, the roof should have a sufficient slope to carry off the rain rapidly, to prevent leakage; from 40 to 45 degrees is found to be the best inclination in our climate. The roof should by no means be glazed with large panes, because small ones have much greater strength, which is requisite to withstand the heavy weight of snow that often falls during the winter, as well as to resist breakage by hail storms in summer. Four or eight inches by six, is the best size for roof-glass,† and with this size the lap of the panes need not be greater than one-eighth of an inch, while it would require to be one-fourth of an inch, were the panes of the usual size. On the front and sides, the sashes may be handsome, and filled in with the best glass; even plate glass has been used in many cases to our knowledge here.‡

\* It need not be forgotten that very great improvements in greenhouse construction have been made since this chapter was written. The attached conservatory is now much more practicable and efficient than at that time. — F. A. W.

† Sixteen by twenty-four inches is now considered the standard size. — F. A. W.

‡ In the original edition the Author here proceeds to give practical suggestions regarding the heating of greenhouses and conservatories; but these directions are now so completely out of date that it seems better to omit them altogether. Instead of rewriting this portion of the book the Editor of the Seventh Edition prefers to recommend to the reader's

Whatever be the style of the architecture of the house, that of the conservatory should in every case conform to it, and evince a degree of enrichment according with that of the main building.

Though a conservatory is often made an expensive luxury, attached only to the better class of residences, there is no reason why cottages of more humble character should not have the same source of enjoyment on a more moderate scale. A small greenhouse, or plant cabinet, as it is sometimes called, eight or ten feet square, communicating with the parlor, and constructed in a simple style, may be erected and kept up in such a manner, as to be a source of much pleasure, for a comparatively trifling sum; and we hope soon to see in this country, where the comforts of life are more equally distributed than in any other, the taste for enjoyments of this kind extending itself with the means for realizing them, into every portion of the northern and middle states.

*Open and covered seats*, of various descriptions, are among the most convenient and useful decorations for the pleasure grounds of a country residence. Situated in portions of the lawn or park, somewhat distant from the house, they offer an agreeable place for rest or repose. If there are certain points from which are obtained agreeable prospects or extensive views of the surrounding country, a seat, by designating those points, and by affording us a convenient mode of enjoying them, has a double recommendation to our minds.

Open and covered seats are of two distinct kinds; one architectural, or formed after artist-like designs, of stone or wood, in Grecian, Gothic, or other forms; which may, if they are intended to produce an elegant effect, have vases on pedestals as accompaniments; the other, rustic, as they are called, which are formed out of trunks and branches of trees, roots, etc., in their natural forms.

attention the advice of the professional greenhouse builders who may be relied on in matters of this sort, and without whose help no one should undertake to build a private plant. — F. A. W.

There are particular sites where each of these kinds of seats, or structures, is, in good taste, alone admissible. In the proximity of elegant and decorated buildings where all around has a polished air, it would evidently be doing violence to our feelings and sense of propriety to admit many rustic seats and structures of any kind; but architectural decorations and architectural seats are there cor-



FIG. 28. A RUSTIC SEAT OF CEMENT

rectly introduced. For the same reason, also, as we have already suggested, that the sculptured forms of vases, etc., would be out of keeping in scenes where nature is predominant (as the distant wooded parts or walks of a residence), architectural, or, in other words, highly artificial seats, would not be in character: but rustic seats and structures, which, from the nature of the materials employed and the simple manner of their construction, appear but one remove from natural forms, are felt at once to be in unison with the surrounding objects. Again, the mural and highly artis-

tical vase and statue, most properly accompany the beautiful landscape garden; while rustic baskets, or vases, are the most fitting decorations of the picturesque landscape garden.

The simplest variety of covered architectural seat is the latticed arbor for vines of various descriptions, with the seat underneath the canopy of foliage; this may with more propriety be introduced in various parts of the grounds than any other of its class, as the luxuriance and natural gracefulness of the foliage which covers the arbor, in a great measure destroys or overpowers the expression of its original form. Lattice arbors, however, neatly formed of rough poles and posts, are much more picturesque and suitable for wilder portions of the scenery.

The temple and the pavilion are highly finished forms of covered seats, which are occasionally introduced in splendid places, where classic architecture prevails.

We consider rustic seats and structures as likely to be much preferred in the villa and cottage residences of the country. They have the merit of being tasteful and picturesque in their appearance, and are easily constructed by the amateur, at comparatively little or no expense. There is scarcely a prettier or more pleasant object for the termination of a long walk in the pleasure-grounds or park, than a neatly thatched structure of rustic work, with its seat for repose, and a view of the landscape beyond. On finding such an object, we are never tempted to think that there has been a lavish expenditure to serve a trifling purpose, but are gratified to see the exercise of taste and ingenuity, which completely answers the end in view.

A *prospect tower* is a most desirable and pleasant structure in certain residences. Where the view is comparatively limited from the grounds, on account of their surface being level, or nearly so, it often happens that the spectator, by being raised some twenty-five or thirty feet above the surface, finds himself in a totally different position, whence a charming bird's-eye view of the surrounding country is obtained.

Those of our readers who may have visited the delightful garden and grounds of M. Parmentier, near Brooklyn, some half a dozen years since, during the life-time of that amiable and zealous amateur of horticulture, will readily remember the rustic prospect-arbor, or tower which was situated at the extremity of his place. It was one of the first pieces of rustic work of any size and displaying any ingenuity, that we remember to have seen here; and from its summit, though the garden walks afforded no prospect, a beautiful reach of the neighborhood for many miles was enjoyed.

On a *ferme ornée*, where the proprietor desires to give a picturesque appearance to the different appendages of the place, rustic work offers an easy and convenient method of attaining this end. The dairy is sometimes made a detached building, and in this country it may be built of logs in a tasteful manner with a thatched roof; the interior being studded, lathed, and plastered in the usual way. Or the ice-house, which generally shows but a rough gable and ridge roof rising out of the ground, might be covered with a neat structure in rustic work, overgrown with vines, which would give it a pleasing or picturesque air, instead of leaving it, as at present, an unsightly object which we are anxious to conceal.

A species of useful decoration, which is perhaps more naturally suggested than any other, is the bridge. Where a constant stream, of greater or less size, runs through the grounds; and divides the banks on opposite sides, a bridge of some description, if it is only a narrow plank over a rivulet, is highly necessary. In pieces of artificial water that are irregular in outline, a narrow strait is often purposely made, with the view of introducing a bridge for effect.

When the stream is large and bold, a handsome architectural bridge of stone or timber is by far the most suitable; especially if the stream is near the house, or if it is crossed on the approach road to the mansion; because a character of permanence and solidity is requisite in such cases. But when it is only a winding rivulet or crystal brook, which



meanders along beneath the shadow of tufts of clustering foliage of the pleasure ground or park, a rustic bridge may be brought in with the happiest effect.

*Rockwork* is another kind of decoration sometimes introduced in particular portions of the scenery of a residence. When well executed, that is, so as to have a natural and harmonious expression, the effect is highly pleasing. We have seen, however, in places where a high keeping and good taste otherwise prevailed, such a barbarous *mélange*, or confused pile of stones mingled with soil, and planted over with dwarfish plants dignified with the name of rockwork, that we have been led to believe that it is much better to attempt nothing of the kind, unless there is a suitable place for its display, and at the same time, the person attempting it is sufficiently an artist, imbued with the spirit of nature in her various compositions and combinations, to be able to produce something higher than a caricature of her works.

The object of rockwork is to produce in scenery or portions of a scene, naturally in a great measure destitute of groups of rocks and their accompanying drapery of plants and foliage, something of the picturesque effect which such natural assemblages confer. To succeed in this, it is evident that we must not heap up little hillocks of mould and smooth stones, in the midst of an open lawn, or the center of a flower-garden. But if we can make choice of a situation where a rocky bank or knoll already partially exists, or would be in keeping with the form of the ground and the character of the scene, then we may introduce such accompaniments with the best possible hope of success.

It often happens in a place of considerable extent, that somewhere in conducting the walks through the grounds, we meet with a ridge with a small rocky face, or perhaps with a large rugged single rock, or a bank where rocky summits just protrude themselves through the surface. The common feeling against such uncouth objects, would direct them to be cleared away at once out of sight. But let us take the case of the large rugged rock, and commence our

picturesque operations upon it. We will begin by collecting from some rocky hill or valley in the neighborhood of the estate, a sufficient quantity of rugged rocks, in size from a few pounds to half a ton or more, if necessary, preferring always such as are already coated with mosses and lichens. These we will assemble around the base of a large rock, in an irregular somewhat pyramidal group, bedding them sometimes partially, sometimes almost entirely in soil heaped in irregular piles around the rock. The rocks must be arranged in a natural manner, avoiding all regularity and appearance of formal art, but placing them sometimes in groups of half a dozen together, overhanging each other, and sometimes half bedded in the soil, and a little distance apart. There are no rules to be given for such operations, but the study of natural groups, of a character similar to that which we wish to produce, will afford sufficient hints if the artist is

“*Prodigue de génie*,”\*

and has a perception of the natural beauty which he desires to imitate.

The rockwork once formed, choice trailing, creeping, and alpine plants, such as delight naturally in similar situations, may be planted in the soil which fills the interstices between the rocks: when these grow to fill their proper places, partly concealing and adorning the rocks with their neat green foliage and pretty blossoms, the effect of the whole, if properly done, will be like some exquisite portion of a rocky bank in wild scenery, and will be found to give an air at once striking and picturesque to the little scene where it is situated.

In small places where the grounds are extremely limited, and the owner wishes to form a rockwork for the growth of alpine and other similar plants, if there are no natural indications of a rocky surface, a rockwork may sometimes be introduced without violating good taste by preparing natural indications artificially, if we may use such a term.

\* A favorite quotation of Mr. Downing's; see page 76.

If a few of the rocks to be employed in the rockwork are sunk half or three-fourths their depth in the soil near the site of the proposed rockwork, so as to have the appearance of a rocky ridge just cropping out, as the geologists say, then the rockwork will, to the eye of a spectator, seem to be connected with, and growing out of this rocky spur or ridge below: or, in other words, there will be an obvious reason for its being situated there, instead of its presenting a wholly artificial appearance.

In a previous page, when treating of the banks of pieces of water formed by art, we endeavored to show how the natural appearance of such banks would be improved by the judicious introduction of rocks partially imbedded into and holding them up. Such situations, in the case of a small lake or pond, or a brook, are admirable sites for rockwork. Where the materials of a suitable kind are abundant, and tasteful ingenuity is not wanting, surprising effects may be produced in a small space. Caves and grottoes, where ferns and mosses would thrive admirably with the gentle drip from the roof, might be made of the overarching rocks arranged so as to appear like small natural caverns. Let the exterior be partially planted with low shrubs and climbing plants, as the wild clematis, and the effect of such bits of landscape could not but be agreeable in secluded portions of the grounds.

In many parts of the country, the secondary blue limestone abounds, which, in the small masses found loose in the woods, covered with mosses and ferns, affords the very finest material for artificial rockwork.

After all, much the safest way is never to introduce rockwork of any description, unless we feel certain that it will have a good effect. When a place is naturally picturesque, and abounds here and there with rocky banks, etc., little should be done but to heighten and aid the expressions of these, if they are wanting in spirit, by adding something more; or softening and giving elegance to the expression, if too wild, by planting the same with beautiful shrubs and climbers. On a tame sandy level, where rocks

of any kind are unknown, their introduction in rockworks, nine times in ten, is more likely to give rise to emotions of the ridiculous, than those of the sublime or picturesque.

*Fountains* are highly elegant garden decorations, rarely seen in this country; which is owing, not so much, we apprehend, to any great cost incurred in putting them up, or any want of appreciation of their sparkling and enlivening effect in garden scenery, as to the fact that there are few artisans here, as abroad, whose business it is to construct and fit up architectural, and other *jets d'eau*.

The first requisite, where a fountain is a desideratum, is a constant supply of water, either from a natural source or an artificial reservoir, some distance higher than the level of the surface whence the jet or fountain is to rise. Where there is a pond, or other body of water, on a higher level than the proposed fountain, it is only necessary to lay pipes under the surface to conduct the supply of water to the required spot; but where there is no such head of water, the latter must be provided from a reservoir artificially prepared, and kept constantly full.

There are two very simple and cheap modes of effecting this, which we shall lay before our readers, and one or the other of which may be adopted in almost every locality. The first is to provide a large flat cistern of sufficient size, which is to be placed under the roof in the upper story of one of the outbuildings, the carriage-house for example, and receive its supplies from the water collected on the roof of the building; the amount of water collected in this way from a roof of moderate size being much more than is generally supposed. The second is to sink a well of capacious size (where such is not already at command) in some part of the grounds where it will not be conspicuous, and over it to erect a small tower, the top of which shall contain a cistern and a wind-mill; which being kept in motion by the wind more or less almost every day in summer, will raise a sufficient quantity of water to keep the reservoir supplied from the well below. In either of these cases, it is only necessary to carry pipes from the cistern

(under the surface, below the reach of frost) to the place where the jet is to issue; the supply in both these cases will, if properly arranged, be more than enough for the consumption of the fountain during the hours when it will be necessary for it to play, viz. from sunrise to evening.

The steam engine is often employed to force up water for the supply of fountains in many of the large public and royal gardens; but there are few cases in this country where private expenditures of this kind would be justifiable.

But where a small stream, or even the overflow of a perpetual spring, can be commanded, the hydraulic ram is the most perfect as well as the simplest and cheapest of all modes of raising water. A supply pipe of an inch in diameter is in many cases sufficient to work the ram and force water to a great distance; and where sufficient to fill a "driving pipe" of two inches diameter can be commanded, a large reservoir may be kept constantly filled.

A simple jet issuing from a circular basin of water, or a cluster of perpendicular jets (candelabra jets), is at once the simplest and most pleasing of fountains. Such are almost the only kinds of fountains which can be introduced with propriety in simple scenes where the predominant objects are sylvan, not architectural.

Weeping, or Tazza fountains, as they are called, are simple and highly pleasing objects, which require only a very moderate supply of water compared with that demanded by a constant and powerful jet. The conduit pipe rises through and fills the vase, which is so formed as to overflow round its entire margin. The ordinary jet and the tazza fountain may be combined in one, when the supply of water is sufficient, by carrying the conduit pipe to the level of the top of the vase, from which the water rises perpendicularly, then falls back into the vase and overflows as before.


A species of rustic fountain which has a good effect, is made by introducing the conduit pipe or pipes among the groups of rockwork alluded to, from whence (the orifice of the pipe being concealed or disguised) the water issues

among the rocks either in the form of a cascade, a weeping fountain, or a perpendicular jet. A little basin of water is formed at the foot or in the midst of the rockwork; and the cool moist atmosphere afforded by the trickling streams, would offer a most congenial site for aquatic plants, ferns, and mosses.

Fountains of a highly artificial character are happily situated only when they are placed in the neighborhood of buildings and architectural forms. When only a single fountain can be maintained in a residence, the center of the flower-garden, or the neighborhood of the piazza or terrace-walk, is, we think, much the most appropriate situation for it. There the liquid element, dancing and sparkling in the sunshine, is an agreeable feature in the scene, as viewed from the windows of the rooms; and the falling watery spray diffusing coolness around is no less delightful in the surrounding stillness of a summer evening.

After all that we have said respecting architectural and rustic decorations of the grounds, we must admit that it requires a great deal of good taste and judgment, to introduce and distribute them so as to be in good keeping with the scenery of country residences. A country residence, where the house with a few tasteful groups of flowers and shrubs, and a pretty lawn, with clusters and groups of luxuriant trees, are all in high keeping and evincing high order, is far more beautiful and pleasing than the same place, or even one of much larger extent, where a profusion of statues, vases, and fountains, or rockwork and rustic seats, are distributed throughout the garden and grounds, while the latter, in themselves, show slovenly keeping, and a crude and meagre knowledge of design in Landscape Gardening.

*Unity of expression* is the maxim and guide in this department of the art, as in every other. Decorations can never be introduced with good effect, when they are at variance with the character of surrounding objects. A beautiful and highly architectural villa may, with the greatest propriety, receive the decorative accompaniments



of elegant vases, sundials, or statues, should the proprietor choose to display his wealth and taste in this manner; but these decorations would be totally misapplied in the case of a plain square edifice, evincing no architectural style in itself.

In addition to this, there is great danger that a mere lover of fine vases may run into the error of assembling these objects indiscriminately in different parts of his grounds, where they have really no place, but interfere with the quiet character of surrounding nature. He may overload the grounds with an unmeaning distribution of sculpturesque or artificial forms, instead of working up those parts where art predominates in such a manner, by means of appropriate decorations, as to heighten by contrast the beauty of the whole adjacent landscape.

With regard to pavilions, summer-houses, rustic seats, and garden edifices of like character, they should, if possible, in all cases be introduced where they are manifestly appropriate or in harmony with the scene. Thus a grotto should not be formed in the side of an open bank, but in a deep shadowy recess; a classic temple or pavilion may crown a beautiful and prominent knoll, and a rustic covered seat may occupy a secluded, quiet portion of the grounds, where undisturbed meditation may be enjoyed. As our favorite Delille says:

“Sachez ce qui convient ou nuit au caractère.  
Un réduit écarté, dans un lieu solitaire,  
Peint mieux la solitude encore et l’abandon.  
Montrez-vous donc fidèle à chaque expression;  
N’allez pas au grand jour offrir un ermitage:  
Ne cachez point un temple au fond d’un bois sauvage.”

LES JARDINS.

Or if certain objects are unavoidably placed in situations of inimical expression, the artist should labor to alter the character of the locality. How much this can be done by the proper choice of trees and shrubs, and the proper arrangement of plantations, those who have seen the differ-

ence in aspect or certain favorite localities of wild nature, as covered with wood, or as denuded by the axe, can well judge. And we hope the amateur, who has made himself familiar with the habits and peculiar expressions of different trees, as pointed out in this work, will not find himself at a loss to effect such changes, by the aid of time, with ease and facility.



## CHAPTER VII

### *THE PHILOSOPHY OF RURAL TASTE \**

**A**LL travellers agree, that while the English people are far from being remarkable for their taste in the arts generally, they are unrivalled in their taste for landscape gardening. So completely is this true, that wherever on the continent one finds a garden, conspicuous for the taste of its design, one is certain to learn that it is laid out in the "English style," and usually kept by an English gardener.

Not, indeed, that the south of Europe is wanting in magnificent gardens, which are as essentially national in their character as the parks and pleasure grounds of England. The surroundings of the superb villas of Florence and Rome, are fine examples of a species of scenery as distinct and striking as any to be found in the world; but which, however splendid, fall as far below the English gardens in interesting the imagination, as a level plain does below the finest mountain valley in Switzerland. In the English landscape garden, one sees and feels everywhere the spirit of nature, only softened and refined by art. In the French or Italian garden, one sees and feels only the effects of art, slightly assisted by nature. In one, the free and luxuriant growth of every tree and shrub, the widening and curving of every walk, suggests perhaps even a higher ideal of nature, — a miniature of a primal paradise, as we would imagine it to have been by divine right; in the other, the prodigality of works of art, the variety of statues and vases, terraces and balustrades, united with walks marked by the same studied symmetry and artistic formality, and only mingled with just foliage enough to constitute a garden,

\* Original date of August, 1849.

— all this suggests rather a statue gallery in the open air, — an accompaniment to the fair architecture of the mansion, than any pure or natural ideas of landscape beauty.

The only writer who has ever attempted to account for this striking distinction of national taste in gardening, which distinguishes the people of northern and southern Europe, is Humboldt. In his last great work — “Cosmos,” he has devoted some pages to the consideration of the study of nature, and the description of natural scenery, — a portion of the work in the highest degree interesting to every man of taste, as well as every lover of nature.

In this portion he shows, we think, very conclusively, that certain races of mankind, however great in other gifts, are deficient in their perceptions of natural beauty; that northern nations possess the love of nature much more strongly than those of the south; and that the Greeks and Romans, richly gifted as they were with the artistic endowments, were inferior to other nations in a profound feeling of the beauty of nature.

Humboldt also shows that our enjoyment of natural landscape gardening, which many suppose to have originated in the cultivated and refined taste of a later age, is, on the contrary, purely a matter of national organization. The parks of the Persian monarchs, and the pleasure gardens of the Chinese, were characterized by the same spirit of natural beauty which we see in the English landscape gardens, and which is widely distinct from that elegant formality of the geometric gardens of the Greeks and Romans of several centuries later. To prove how sound were the principles of Chinese taste, ages ago, he gives us a quotation from an ancient Chinese writer, Lieu-tscheu, which might well be the text of the most tasteful improver of the present day, and which we copy for the study of our own readers.

“What is it,” says Lieu-tscheu, “that we seek in the pleasures of a garden? It has always been agreed that these plantations should make men amends for living at a distance from what would be their more congenial and agreeable dwelling place, in the midst of nature, free and

unconstrained. The art of laying out gardens consists, therefore, in combining cheerfulness of prospect, luxuriance and growth, shade, retirement and repose; so that the rural aspect may produce an illusion. Variety, which is the chief merit in the natural landscape, must be sought by the choice of ground, with alternation of hill and dale, flowing streams and lakes, covered with aquatic plants. Symmetry is wearisome, and a garden where every thing betrays constraint and art becomes tedious and distasteful."

We shall seek in vain, in the treatises of modern writers, for a theory of rural taste more concise and satisfactory than this of the Chinese landscape garden.

Looking at this instinctive love of nature as a national characteristic, which belongs almost exclusively to distinct races, Humboldt asserts, that while the "profoundest feeling of nature speaks forth in the earliest poetry of the Hebrews, the Indians, and the Semitic and Indo-Germanic nations, it is comparatively wanting in the works of the Greeks and Romans."

"In Grecian art," says he, "all is made to concentrate within the sphere of human life and feeling. The description of nature, in her manifold diversity, as a distinct branch of poetic literature, was altogether foreign to the ideas of the Greeks. With them, the landscape is always the mere background of a picture, in the foreground of which human figures are moving. Passion, breaking forth in action, invited their attention almost exclusively; the agitation of politics, and a life passed chiefly in public, withdrew men's minds from enthusiastic absorption in the tranquil pursuit of nature."

On the other hand, the poetry of Britain, from a very early period, has been especially remarkable for the deep and instinctive love of natural beauty which it exhibits. And here lies the explanation of the riddle of the superiority of English taste in rural embellishment; that people enjoying their gardens the more as they embodied the spirit of nature, while the Italians, like the Greeks, enjoyed them the more as they embodied the spirit of art.

The Romans, tried in the alembic of the great German writer, are found still colder in their love of nature's charms than the Greeks. "A nation which manifested a marked predilection for agriculture and rural life might have justified other hopes; but with all their capacity for practical activity, the Romans, in their cold gravity and measured sobriety of understanding, were, as a people, far inferior to the Greeks in the perception of beauty, far less sensitive to its influence, and much more devoted to the realities of every-day life, than to an idealizing contemplation of nature."

Judging them by their writings, Humboldt pronounces the great Roman writers to be comparatively destitute of real poetic feeling for nature. Livy and Tacitus show, in their histories, little or no interest in natural scenery. Cicero describes landscape without poetic feeling. Pliny, though he rises to true poetic inspiration when describing the great moving causes of the natural universe, "has few individual descriptions of nature." Ovid, in his exile, saw little to charm him in the scenery around him; and Virgil, though he often devoted himself to subjects which prompt the enthusiasm of a lover of nature, rarely glows with the fire of a true worshipper of her mysterious charms. And not only were the Romans indifferent to the beauty of natural landscape which daily surrounded them, but even to the sublimity and magnificence of those wilder and grander scenes, into which their love of conquest often led them. The following striking paragraph, from Humboldt's work, is at once eloquent and convincing on this point:

"No description of the eternal snows of the Alps, when tinged in the morning or evening with a rosy hue, — of the beauty of the blue glacier ice, or of any part of the grandeur of the scenery in Switzerland, — have reached us from the ancients, although statesmen and generals, with men of letters in their train, were constantly passing from Helvetia into Gaul. All these travellers think only of complaining of the difficulties of the way; the romantic character of the scenery seems never to have engaged their attention.

It is even known that Julius Cæsar, when returning to his legions, in Gaul, employed his time while passing over the Alps in preparing a grammatical treatise, 'De Analogia.'"

The corollary to be drawn from this learned and curious investigation of the history of national sensibility and taste, is a very clear and satisfactory one, viz., that as success, in "the art of composing a landscape" (as Humboldt significantly calls landscape gardening), depends on appreciation of nature, the taste of an individual as well as that of a nation, will be in direct proportion to the profound sensibility with which he perceives the beautiful in natural scenery.

Our own observation not only fully confirms this theory, but it also leads us to the recognition of the fact, that among our countrymen, at the present day, there are two distinct classes of taste in rural art; first, the poetic or northern taste, based on a deep, instinctive feeling for nature; and second, the artistic or symmetric taste, based on a perception of the beautiful, as embodied in works of art.

The larger part of our countrymen inherit the northern or Anglo-Saxon love of nature, and find most delight in the natural landscape garden; but we have also not a few to whom the classic villa, with its artistic adornments of vase and statue, urn and terrace, is an object of much more positive pleasure than the most varied and seductive gardens, laid out with all the witchery of nature's own handiwork.

It is not part of our philosophy to urge our readers to war against their organizations, to whichever path, in the Delectable Mountains, they may be led by them; but those who have not already studied "Cosmos" will, we trust, at least thank us for giving them the key to their natural bias towards one or the other of the two world-wide styles of ornamental gardening.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *THE BEAUTIFUL IN GROUND \**

**W**E have sketched, elsewhere, the elements of the beautiful in a tree. Let us glance for a few moments at the beautiful in ground.

We may have readers who think themselves not devoid of some taste for nature, but who have never thought of looking for beauty in the mere surface of the earth, whether in a natural landscape, or in ornamental grounds. Their idea of beauty is, for the most part, attached to the foliage and verdure, the streams of water, the high hills and the deep valleys, that make up the landscape. A meadow is to them but a meadow, and a ploughed field is but the same thing in a rough state. And yet there is a great and enduring interest, to a refined and artistic eye, in the mere surface of the ground. There is a sense of pleasure awakened by the pleasing lines into which yonder sloping bank of turf steals away from the eye, and a sense of ugliness and harshness, by the raw and broken outline of the abandoned quarry on the hillside, which hardly any one can be so obtuse as not to see and feel. Yet the finer gradations are nearly overlooked, and the charm of beautiful surface in a lawn is seldom or never considered in selecting a new site or improving an old one.

We believe artists and men of taste have agreed that all forms of acknowledged beauty are composed of curved lines; and we may add to this, that the more gentle and gradual the curves, or rather the farther they are removed from those hard and forcible lines which denote violence, the more beautiful are they. The principle applies as well to the surface of the earth as to other objects. The most

\* Original date of March, 1852.



FIG. 29. A BEAUTIFULLY SHAPED LAWN

beautiful shape in ground is that where one undulation melts gradually and insensibly into another. Every one who has observed scenery where the foregrounds were remarkable for beauty, must have been struck by this prevalence of curved lines; and every landscape gardener well knows that no grassy surface is so captivating to the eye, as one where these gentle swells and undulations rise and melt away gradually into one another. Some poet, happy in his fancy, has called such bits of grassy slopes and swells, "earth's smiles;" and when the effect of the beauty and form of outline is heightened by the pleasing gradation of light and shade, caused by the sun's light, variously reflected by such undulations of lawn, the simile seems strikingly appropriate. With every change of position the outlines vary, and the lights and shades vary with them, so that the eye is doubly pleased by the beauty of form and *chiaroscuro*, in a lawn with gracefully undulating surface.

A flat or level surface is considered beautiful by many persons, though it has no beauty in itself. It is, in fact, chiefly valued because it evinces art. Though there is no positive beauty in a straight or level line, it is often interesting as expressive of power, and we feel as much awed by the boundless prairie or desert, as by the lofty snow-capped hill. On a smaller scale, a level surface is sometimes agreeable in the midst of a rude and wild country by way of contrast, as a small, level garden in the Alps will sometimes attract one astonishingly, that would be passed by, unnoticed, in the midst of a flat and cultivated country.

Hence, as there are a thousand men who value power, where there is one who can feel beauty, we see all ignorant persons who set about embellishing their pleasure-grounds, or even the site for a home, immediately commence levelling the surface. Once brought to this level, improvement can go no further, according to their views, since to subjugate or level, is the whole aim of man's ambition. Once levelled, you may give to grounds, or even to a whole landscape, according to their theory, as much beauty as you like. It is only a question of expense.



This is a fearful fallacy, however; fearful, oftentimes, to both the eye and the purse. If a dead level were the thing needful to constitute beauty of surface, then all Holland would be the Arcadia of landscape painters; and while Claude, condemned to tame Italy, would have painted the interior of inns, and groups of boors drinking (*vide* the Dutch School of art), Teniers, living in the dead level of his beautiful nature, would have bequeathed to the world pictures of his native land, full of the loveliness of meadows smooth as a carpet, or enlivened only by pollard willows and stagnant canals. It is not the less fearful to see, as we have often seen in this country, where new places are continually made, a finely varied outline of ground utterly spoiled by being graded for the mansion and its surrounding lawn, at an expense which would have curved all the walks, and filled the grounds with the finest trees and shrubs, if their surface had been left nearly or quite as nature formed it. Not much better, or even far worse, is the foolish fancy many persons have of terracing every piece of sloping ground, as a mere matter of ornament, where no terrace is needed. It may be pretty safely said that a terrace is always ugly unless it is on a large scale and is treated with dignity so as to become part of the building itself, or more properly be supposed to belong to it than to the grounds, like the fine, architectural terraces which surround the old English mansions. But little gardens thrown up into terraces, are devoid of all beauty whatever, though they may often be rendered more useful or available in this way.

The surface of ground is rarely ugly in a state of nature, because all nature leans to the beautiful, and the constant action of the elements goes continually to soften and wear away the harshness and violence of surface. What cannot be softened, is hidden and rounded by means of foliage, trees and shrubs, and creeping vines, and so the tendency to the curve is always greater and greater. But man often forms ugly surfaces of ground, by breaking up all natural curves, without recognizing their expression, by distributing lumps of earth here and there, by grading levels in the

midst of undulations, and raising mounds on perfectly smooth surfaces; in short, by regarding only the little he wishes to do in his folly, and not studying the larger part that nature has already done in her wisdom. As a common though accidental illustration of this, we may notice that the mere routine of tillage on a farm, has a tendency to destroy natural beauty of surface by ridging up the soil at the outsides of the field and thus breaking up that continuous flow of line which delights the eye.

Our object in these remarks is simply to ask our readers to think in the beginning, before they even commence any improvements on the surface of ground which they wish to embellish — to think in what natural beauty really consists, and whether in grading, they are not wasting money, and losing that which they are seeking. It will be better still, if they will consider the matter seriously, when they are about buying a place, since, as we have before observed, no money is expended with so little to show for it, and so little satisfaction, as that spent in changing the original surface of the ground.

Practically the rules we would deduce are the following: To select, always, if possible, a surface varied by gentle curves and undulations. If something of this character already exists, it may often be greatly heightened or improved at little cost. Very often, too, a nearly level surface may, by a very trifling addition, only adding a few inches in certain points, be raised to a character of positive beauty, by simply following the hints given by nature.

When a surface is quite level by nature, we must usually content ourselves with trusting to planting, and the arrangement of walks, buildings, etc., to produce beauty and variety; and we would always, in such cases, rather expend money in introducing beautiful vases, statues, or other works of positive artistic merit, than to terrace and unmake what character nature has stamped on the ground.

Positively ugly and forbidding surfaces of ground, may be rendered highly interesting and beautiful, only by changing their character, entirely, by planting. Such ground, after

this has been done, becomes only the skeleton of the fair outside of beauty and verdure that covers the forbidding original. Some of the most picturesque ravines and rocky hillsides, if stripped entirely of their foliage, would appear as ugly as they were before beautiful; and while this may teach the improver that there is no situation that may not be rendered attractive, if the soil will yield a growth of trees, shrubs, and vines, it does not the less render it worth our attention in choosing or improving a place, to examine carefully beforehand, in what really consists the beautiful in ground, and whether we should lose or gain it in our proposed improvements.

## CHAPTER IX

### *THE BEAUTIFUL IN A TREE\**

**I**N what does the beauty of a tree consist? We mean of course what may strictly be called an ornamental tree, not a tree planted for its fruit in the orchard, or growing for timber in the forest, but standing alone in the lawn or meadow, growing in groups in the pleasure ground, overarching the roadside, or bordering some stately avenue.

Is it not, first of all, that such a tree, standing where it can grow untouched, and develop itself on all sides, is one of the finest pictures of symmetry and proportion that the eye can anywhere meet with? The tree may be young, or it may be old, but if left to nature, it is sure to grow into some form that courts the eye and satisfies it. It may branch out boldly and grandly, like the oak; its top may be broad and stately, like the chestnut, or drooping and elegant, like the elm, or delicate and airy like the birch, but it is sure to grow into the type form, either beautiful or picturesque, that nature stamped upon its species, and which is the highest beauty that such tree can possess. It is true that nature plants some trees, like the fir and pine, in the fissures of the rock and on the edge of the precipice; that she twists their boughs and gnarls their stems by storms and tempests thereby adding to their picturesque power in sublime and grand scenery; but as a general truth, it may be clearly stated that the beautiful in a tree of any kind is never so fully developed as when, in a genial soil and climate, it stands quite alone, stretching its boughs upward freely to the sky and outward to the breeze and even downward towards the earth, almost touching it with their graceful sweep, till only a glimpse of the

\* Original date of February, 1851.

fine trunk is had at its spreading base, and the whole top is one great globe of floating, waving, drooping, or sturdy luxuriance, giving one as perfect an idea of symmetry and proportion, as can be found short of the Grecian Apollo itself.



FIG. 30. THE GRACEFUL NATIVE BIRCHES

We have taken the pains to present this beau ideal of a fine ornamental tree to our readers in order to contrast it with another picture, not from nature, but by the hands of quite another master.

This master is the man whose passion is to prune trees. To his mind there is nothing comparable to the satisfaction of trimming a tree. A tree in a state of nature is a no more respectable object than an untamed savage. It is running to waste with leaves and branches and has none of the look of civilization about it. Only let him use his saw for a short

time upon any young specimen just growing into adolescence and throwing out its delicate branches like a fine fall of drapery to conceal its naked trunk, and you shall see how he will improve its appearance. Yes, he will trim up those branches till there is a tall, naked stem, higher than his head. That shows that the tree has been taken care of — has been trimmed — *ergo*, trained and educated into a look of respectability. This is his great point — the fundamental law of sylvan beauty in his mind — a bare pole with a top of foliage at the end of it. If he cannot do this he may content himself with thinning out the branches to let in the light, or clipping them at the ends to send the head upwards, or cutting out the leader to make it spread laterally. But though the trees formed by these latter modes of pruning are well enough, they never reach that exalted standard which has for its type a pole as bare as a ship's mast with only a flying studding-sail of green boughs at the end of it.\*

We suppose this very common pleasure — for it must be a pleasure — which so many persons find in trimming up ornamental trees is based on a feeling that trees growing quite in the natural way must be capable of some amelioration by art; and as pruning is usually acknowledged to be useful in developing certain points in a fruit tree, a like good purpose will be reached by the use of the knife upon an ornamental tree. But the comparison does not hold good, since the objects aimed at are essentially different. Pruning — at least all useful pruning — as applied to fruit trees, is applied for the purpose of adding to, diminishing, or otherwise regulating the fruitfulness of the tree; and this in many cases is effected at the acknowledged diminution of the growth, luxuriance and beauty of the trees, so far as spread of branches and prodigality of foliage go. But even here the pruner who prunes only for the sake of using the knife (like heartless young surgeons in hospitals) not un-

\* Some of our readers may not be aware that to cut off the side branches on a young trunk, actually lessens the growth in diameter of that trunk at once. — A. J. D.

frequently goes too far, injures the perfect maturity of the crop and hastens the decline of the tree by depriving it of the fair proportions which nature has established between the leaf and the fruit.

But for the most part, we imagine that the practice we complain of is a want of perception of what is truly beautiful in an ornamental tree. It seems to us indisputable that no one who has any perception of the beautiful in nature could ever doubt for a moment that a fine single elm or oak such as we may find in the valley of the Connecticut or the Genesee, which has never been touched by the knife, is the most perfect standard of sylvan grace, symmetry, dignity, and finely balanced proportions that it is possible to conceive. One would no more wish to touch it with saw or axe (unless to remove some branch that has fallen into decay) than to give a nicer curve to the rainbow or add freshness to the dew-drop. If any of our readers who still stand by the pruning-knife will only give themselves up to the study of such trees as these — trees that have the most completely developed forms that nature stamps upon the species — they are certain to arrive at the same conclusions. For the beautiful in nature, though not alike visible to every man, never fails to dawn sooner or later upon all who seek her in the right spirit.

And in art too, no great master of landscape, no Claude, or Poussin, or Turner, paints mutilated trees, but trees of grand and majestic heads, full of health and majesty, or grandly stamped with the wild irregularity of nature in her sterner types. The few Dutch or French artists who are the exceptions to this, and have copied those emblems of pruned deformity — the pollard trees that figure in the landscapes of the Low Countries — have given local truthfulness to their landscapes at the expense of every thing like sylvan loveliness. A pollard willow should be the very type and model of beauty in the eye of the champion of the pruning saw. Its finest parallels in the art of mending nature's proportions for the sake of beauty are in the flattened heads of a certain tribe of Indians and the deformed

feet of Chinese women. What nature has especially shaped for a delight to the eye and a fine suggestion to the spiritual sense as a beautiful tree, or the human form divine, man should not lightly undertake to remodel or clip of its fair proportions.



## CHAPTER X

### ON THE DRAPERY OF COTTAGES AND GARDENS \*

OUR readers very well know that, in the country, whenever any thing especially tasteful is to be done, when a church is to be "dressed for Christmas," a public hall festooned for a fair, or a salon decorated for a horticultural show, we have to entreat the assistance of the fairer half of humanity. All that is most graceful and charming in this way owes its existence to female hands. } ?  
Over the heavy exterior of man's handiwork they weave a fairy-like web of enchantment, which, like our Indian summer haze upon autumn hills, spiritualizes and makes poetical whatever of rude form or rough outlines may lie beneath.

Knowing all this, as we well do, we write this essay especially for the eyes of the ladies. ? They are naturally mistresses of the art of embellishment. Men are so stupid, ? in the main, about these matters, that, if the majority of them had their own way, there would neither be a ringlet, nor a ruffle, a wreath, nor a nosegay left in the world. All would be as stiff and as meaningless as their own meagre black coats, without an atom of the graceful or romantic about them; nothing to awaken a spark of interest or stir a chord of feeling; nothing, in short, but downright, commonplace matter-of-fact. And they undertake to defend it — the logicians — on the ground of utility and the spirit of the age! As if trees did not bear lovely blossoms as well as good fruit; as if the sun did not give us rainbows as well as light and warmth; as if there were not still mocking-birds and nightingales as well as ducks and turkeys.

But enough of that. You do not need any arguments to

\* Original date of February, 1849



FIG. 31. VINE-DRAPED COTTAGE

prove that grace is a quality as positive as electro-magnetism. Would that you could span the world with it as quickly as Mr. Morse with his telegraph. To come to the point, we want to talk a little with you about what we call the drapery of cottages and gardens; about those beautiful vines, and climbers, and creepers, which nature made on purpose to cover up every thing ugly, and to heighten the charm of every thing pretty and picturesque. In short, we want your aid and assistance in dressing, embellishing, and decorating, not for a single holiday, fair, or festival, but for years and for ever, the outsides of our simple cottages and country homes; wreathing them about with such perennial festoons of verdure, and starring them over with such bouquets of delicious odor, that your husbands and brothers would no more think of giving up such houses, than they would of abandoning you (as that beggarly Greek, Theseus, did the lovely Ariadne) to the misery of solitude on a desolate island.

And what a difference a little of this kind of rural drapery, tastefully arranged, makes in the aspect of a cottage or farm house in the country! At the end of the village, for instance, is that old-fashioned stone house, which was the homestead of Tim Steady. First and last, that family lived there two generations; and every thing about them had a look of some comfort. But with the exception of a coat of paint, which the house got once in ten years, nothing was ever done to give the place the least appearance of taste. An old, half decayed ash tree stood near the south door, and a few decrepit and wornout apple trees behind the house. But there was not a lilac bush, nor a syringa, not a rose bush nor a honeysuckle about the whole premises. You would never suppose that a spark of affection for nature, or a gleam of feeling for grace or beauty, in any shape, ever dawned within or around the house.

Well, five years ago the place was put up for sale. There were some things to recommend it. There was a "good well of water;" the house was in excellent repair; and the location was not a bad one. But, though many went to

see it, and "liked the place tolerably well," yet there seemed to be a want of heart about it, that made it unattractive, and prevented people from buying it.

It was a good while in the market; but at last it fell into the hands of the Widow Winning and her two daughters. They bought it at a bargain, and must have foreseen its capabilities.

What that house and place is now, it would do your heart good to see. A porch of rustic trellis-work was built over the front doorway, simple and pretty hoods upon brackets over the windows, the dooryard was all laid out afresh, the wornout apple trees were dug up, a nice bit of lawn made around the house, and pleasant groups of shrubbery (mixed with two or three graceful elms) planted about it. But, most of all, what fixes the attention, is the lovely profusion of flowering vines that enrich the old house, and transform what was a soulless habitation, into a home that captivates all eyes. Even the old and almost leafless ash tree is almost overrun with a creeper, which is stuck full of gay trumpets all summer, that seem to blow many a strain of gladness to the passers by. How many sorts of honeysuckle, clematises, roses, etc., there are on wall or trellis about that cottage, is more than we can tell. Certain it is, however, that half the village walks past that house of a summer night, and inwardly thanks the fair inmates for the fragrance that steals through the air in its neighborhood: and no less certain is it that this house is now the "admired of all admirers," and that the Widow Winning has twice refused double the sum it went begging at when it was only the plain and meagre home of Tim Steady.

Many of you in the country, as we well know, are compelled by circumstances to live in houses which some one else built, or which have, by ill-luck, an ugly expression in every board or block of stone, from the sill of the door to the peak of the roof. Paint won't hide it, nor cleanliness disguise it, however goodly and agreeable things they are. But vines will do both; or, what is better, they will, with

their lovely, graceful shapes, and rich foliage and flowers, give a new character to the whole exterior. However ugly the wall, however bald the architecture, only give it this fair drapery of leaf and blossom, and nature will touch it at once with something of grace and beauty.

“What are our favorite vines?” This is what you would ask of us, and this is what we are most anxious to tell you; as we see, already, that no sooner will the spring open, than you will immediately set about the good work.

Our two favorite vines, then, for the adornment of cottages in the northern states, are the double *Prairie Rose*, and the *Chinese Wistaria*. Why we like these best, is because they have the greatest number of good qualities to recommend them. In the first place, they are hardy, thriving in all soils and exposures; in the second place, they are luxuriant in their growth, and produce an effect in a very short time — after which, they may be kept to the limits of a single pillar on the piazza, or trained over the whole side of a cottage; in the last place, they are rich in the foliage, and beautiful in the blossom.

Now there are many vines more beautiful than these in some respects, but not for this purpose, and taken altogether. For cottage drapery, a popular vine must be one that will grow anywhere, with little care, and must need no shelter, and the least possible attention, beyond seeing that it has something to run on, and a looking over, pruning, and tying up once a year — say in early spring. This is precisely the character of these two vines; and hence we think they deserve to be planted from one end of the Union to the other. They will give the greatest amount of beauty, with the least care, and in the greatest number of places.

The *Prairie roses* are, no doubt, known to most of you. They have been raised from seeds of the wild rose of Michigan, which clambers over high trees in the forests, and are remarkable for the profusion of their very double flowers (so double, that they always look like large pouting buds, rather than full-blown roses), and their extreme hardiness and luxuriance of growth, — shoots of twenty feet, in a

schaum — that you cannot but laugh outright at the first sight of them. Whether Daphne was truly metamorphosed into the sweet flower that bears her name, as Ovid says, we know not; but no one can look at the blossom of the Dutchman's pipe vine, without being convinced that nature has punished some inveterately lazy Dutch smoker by turning him into a vine, which loves nothing so well as to bask in the warm sunshine, with its hundred pipes, dangling on all sides.

And now, having glanced at the best of the climbers and twiners, properly so called (all of which need a little training and supporting), let us take a peep at those climbing shrubs that seize hold of a wall, building, or fence, of themselves, by throwing out their little rootlets into the stone or brick wall as they grow up, so that it is as hard to break up any attachments of theirs, when they get fairly established, as it was to part Hector and Andromache. The principal of these are the true Ivy of Europe, the Virginia Creeper or American Ivy, and the Trumpet Creepers (*Bignonias* or *Tecomas*).

These are all fine, picturesque vines, not to be surpassed for certain effects by anything else that will grow out of doors in our climate. You must remember, however, that, as they are wedded for life to whatever they cling to, they must not be planted by the sides of wooden cottages, which are to be kept in order by a fresh coat of paint now and then. Other climbers may be taken down, and afterwards tied back to their places; but constant, indissoluble intimacies like these must be let alone. You will therefore always take care to plant them where they can fix themselves permanently on a wall of some kind, or else upon some rough wooden building, where they will not be likely to be disturbed.

Certainly the finest of all this class of climbers is the European Ivy. Such rich masses of glossy, deep green foliage, such fine contrasts of light and shade, and such a wealth of associations, is possessed by no other plant; the Ivy, to which the ghost of all the storied past alone tells

its tale of departed greatness; the confidant of old ruined castles and abbeys; the bosom companion of solitude itself, —

“Deep in your most sequestered bower  
Let me at last recline,  
Where solitude, mild, modest flower,  
Leans on her *ivy'd* shrine.”

True to these instincts, the Ivy does not seem to be naturalized so easily in America as most other foreign vines. We are yet too young — this country of a great future, and a little past.

The richest and most perfect specimen of it that we have seen, in the northern states, is upon the cottage of Washington Irving, on the Hudson, near Tarrytown. He, who as you all know, lingers over the past with a reverence as fond and poetical as that of a pious Crusader for the walls of Jerusalem — yes, he has completely won the sympathies of the Ivy, even on our own soil, and it has garlanded and decked his antique and quaint cottage, “Sunnyside,” till its windows peep out from amid the wealth of its foliage, like the dark eyes of a Spanish Señora from a shadowy canopy of dark lace and darker tresses.

The Ivy is the finest of climbers, too, because it is so perfectly evergreen. North of New York it is a little tender, and needs to be sheltered for a few years, unless it be planted on a north wall, quite out of the reach of the winter sun); and north of Albany, we think it will not grow at all. But all over the middle states it should be planted and cherished, wherever there is a wall for it to cling to, as the finest of all cottage drapery.\*

After this plant, comes always our Virginia Creeper, or American Ivy, as it is often called (*Ampelopsis*). It grows more rapidly than the Ivy, clings in the same way to wood or stone, and makes rich and beautiful festoons of verdure

\* The experience of another 70 years does not bear out Mr. Downing's recommendation of the English ivy. There are only a few localities, mostly on the eastern seaboard, where it can be used with satisfaction. — F. A. W.

in summer, dying off in autumn, before the leaves fall, in the finest crimson. Its greatest beauty, on this account, is perhaps seen when it runs up in the centre of a dark cedar, or other evergreen, — exhibiting in October the richest contrast of the two colors. It will grow anywhere, in the coldest situations, and only asks to be planted, to work out its own problem of beauty without further attention. This and the European Ivy are the two climbers, above all others, for the exteriors of our rural stone churches; to which they will give a local interest greater than that of any carving in stone, at a millionth part of the cost.

The common Trumpet Creeper all of you know by heart. It is rather a wild and rambling fellow in its habits; but nothing is better to cover old outside chimneys, stone out-buildings, and rude walls and fences. The sort with large cup-shaped flowers is a most showy and magnificent climber in the middle states, where the winters are moderate, absolutely glowing in July with its thousands of rich orange-red blossoms, like clusters of bright goblets.\*

We might go on, and enumerate dozens more of fine twining shrubs and climbing roses; but that would only defeat our present object, which is not to give you a garden catalogue, but to tell you of half a dozen hardy shrubby vines, which we implore you to make popular; so that wherever we travel, from Maine to St. Louis, we shall see no rural cottages shivering in their chill nudity of bare walls or barer boards, but draped tastefully with something fresh, and green, and graceful: let it be a hop-vine if nothing better, — but roses, and wistaria, and honeysuckles, if they can be had. How much this apparently trifling feature, if it could be generally carried out, would alter the face of the whole country, you will not at once be able to believe. What summer foliage is to a naked forest, what rich tufts of ferns are to a rock in a woodland dell, what “hyacinthine locks” are to the goddess of beauty, or wings to an angel, the drapery of climbing plants is to cottages in the country.

One word or two about vines in the gardens and pleasure-

\* Given in Bailey’s “Cyclopedia” as *Campsis Chinensis*. — F. A. W.





FIG. 32. CLIMBING ROSES ON A GARDEN GATE

grounds before we conclude. How to make arbors and trellises is no mystery, though you will, no doubt, agree with us, that the less formal and the more rustic the better.\* But how to manage single specimens of fine climbers, in the lawn or garden, so as to display them to the best advantage, is not quite so clear. Small fanciful frames are pretty, but soon want repairs; and stakes, though ever so stout, will rot off at the bottom, and blow down in high winds, to your great mortification; and that, too, perhaps, when your plant is in its very court dress of bud and blossom.

Now the best mode of treating single vines, when you have not a tree to festoon them upon, is one which many of you will be able to attain easily. It is nothing more than getting from the woods the trunk of a cedar tree, from ten to fifteen feet high, shortening in all the side branches to within two feet of the trunk (and still shorter near the top), and setting it again, as you would a post, two or three feet deep in the ground.

Cedar is the best; partly because it will last for ever, and partly because the regular disposition of its branches forms naturally a fine trellis for the shoots to fasten upon.

Plant your favorite climber, whether rose, wistaria, or honeysuckle, at the foot of this tree. It will soon cover it from top to bottom, with the finest pyramid of verdure. The young shoots will ramble out on its side branches, and when in full bloom, will hang most gracefully or picturesquely from the ends.

The advantage of this mode is that, once obtained, your support lasts for fifty years; it is so firm that winds do not blow it down; it presents every side to the kindly influences of sun and air, and permits every blossom that opens to be seen by the admiring spectator.

\* This strong recommendation of "rustic" architecture would not meet the modern taste; nor would the following plan of planting rustic cedar posts in the lawn for the support of climbing vines. This was once very much the vogue, but the present editor feels compelled to disagree strongly with Mr. Downing's approval of it. — F. A. W.

## CHAPTER XI

### *A FEW HINTS ON LANDSCAPE GARDENING\**

NOVEMBER is, above all others, the tree-planting month over the wide Union.† Accordingly, every one who has a rood of land looks about him at this season to see what can be done to improve and embellish it. Some have bought new places where they have to build and create everything in the way of home scenery, and they, of course, will have their heads full of shade trees and fruit trees, ornamental shrubs and evergreens, lawns and walks, and will tax their imagination to the utmost to see in the future all the varied beauty which they mean to work out of the present blank fields that they have taken in hand. These, look for the most rapid-growing and effective materials, with which to hide their nakedness, and spread something of the drapery of beauty over their premises, in the shortest possible time. Others have already a goodly stock of foliage and shade, but the trees have been planted without taste, and by thinning out somewhat here, making an opening there, and planting a little yonder, they hope to break up the stiff boundaries, and thus magically to convert awkward angles into graceful curves, and harmonious outlines. Whilst others, again, whose gardens and pleasure grounds have long had their earnest devotion, are busy turning over the catalogues of the nurseries in search of rare and curious trees and shrubs to add still more novelty and interest to their favorite lawns and walks. As the pleasure of creation may be supposed to be the highest

\* Original date of November, 1851.

† The advantages of November as a tree-planting month seem to be generally overlooked. Exclusive spring planting is too commonly accepted as the only way. — F. A. W.

pleasure, and as the creation of scenery in landscape gardening is the nearest approach to the matter that we can realize in a practical way, it is not difficult to see that November, dreary as it may seem to the cockneys who have rushed back to gas-lights and the paved streets of the city, is full of interest and even excitement to the real lover of the country.

It is, however, one of the characteristics of the human mind to overlook that which is immediately about us, however admirable, and to attach the greatest importance to whatever is rare, and difficult to be obtained. A remarkable illustration of the truth of this, may be found in the ornamental gardening of this country, which is noted for the strongly marked features made in its artificial scenery by certain poorer sorts of foreign trees, as well as the almost total neglect of finer native materials, that are indigenous to the soil. We will undertake to say, for example, that almost one-half of all the deciduous trees that have been set in ornamental plantations for the last ten years, have been composed, for the most part, of two very indifferent foreign trees — the ailantus and the silver poplar.\* When we say indifferent, we do not mean to say that such trees as the ailantus and the silver poplar, are not valuable trees in their way — that is, that they are rapid growing, will thrive in all soils, and are transplanted with the greatest facility — suiting at once both the money-making grower and the ignorant planter; but we do say, that when such trees as the American elms, maples and oaks, can be raised with so little trouble — trees as full of grace, dignity, and beauty, as any that grow in any part of the world — trees, too, that go on gathering new beauty with age, instead of throwing up suckers that utterly spoil lawns, or that become, after the first few years, only a more intolerable nuisance every day — it is time to protest against the indiscriminate use of such sylvan materials — no matter how much of “heav-

\* This is remarkable testimony. The popularity of the ailantus and the silver poplar must have been short, for they cut a very unimportant figure in modern tree plantations. — F. A. W.

enly origin," \* or "silvery" foliage, they may have in their well sounding names.

It is by no means the fault of the nurserymen that their nurseries abound in ailantuses and poplars while so many of our fine forest trees are hardly to be found. The nurserymen are bound to pursue their business so as to make it profitable, and if people ignore oaks and ashes, and adore poplars and ailantuses, nurserymen cannot be expected to starve because the planting public generally are destitute of taste.

What the planting public need is to have their attention called to the study of nature — to be made to understand that it is in our beautiful woodland slopes, with their undulating outlines, our broad river meadows studded with single trees and groups allowed to grow and expand quite in a state of free and graceful development, our steep hills, sprinkled with picturesque pines and firs, and our deep valleys, dark with hemlocks and cedars, that the real lessons in the beautiful and picturesque are to be taken, which will lead us to the appreciation of the finest elements of beauty in the embellishment of our country places — instead of this miserable rage for "trees of heaven" and other fashionable tastes of the like nature.† There are, for example, to be found along side of almost every sequestered lawn by the roadside in the northern states, three trees that are strikingly remarkable for beauty of foliage, growth or flower, viz.: the tulip tree, the sassafras, and the pepperidge. The first is, for stately elegance, almost unrivalled among forest trees: the second, when planted in cultivated soil and allowed a fair chance, is more beautiful in its diversified laurel-like foliage than almost any foreign tree in our pleasure grounds: and the last is not surpassed by the orange or the bay in its glossy leaves, deep green as an

\* The ailantus bears as one of its vernacular names the grandiloquent title of "Tree of Heaven." — F. A. W.

† This cult for native materials, thus clearly announced by Mr. Downing, was not always followed by him without deviation. At least it came to have much more partisan support and much greater popular acceptance among some of his successors. — F. A. W.

emerald in summer, and rich red as a ruby in autumn — and all of them freer from the attacks of insects than either larches, lindens, or elms, or a dozen other favorite foreign trees, — besides being unaffected by the summer sun where horse chestnuts are burned brown, and holding their foliage through all the season like native born Americans, when foreigners shrivel and die; and yet we could name a dozen nurseries where there is a large collection of ornamental trees of foreign growth, but neither a sassafras, nor a pepperidge, nor perhaps a tulip tree could be had for love or money.

There is a large spirit of inquiry and a lively interest in rural taste, awakened on every side of us, at the present time, from Maine to the valley of the Mississippi; but the great mistake made by most novices is that they study gardens too much, and nature too little. Now gardens, in general, are stiff and graceless, except just so far as nature, ever free and flowing, reasserts her rights in spite of man's want of taste, or helps him when he has endeavored to work in her own spirit. But the fields and woods are full of instruction, and in such features of our richest and most smiling and diversified country must the best hints for the embellishment of rural homes always be derived. And yet it is not any portion of the woods and fields that we wish our finest pleasure ground scenery precisely to resemble. We rather wish to select from the finest sylvan features of nature, and to recompose the materials in a choicer manner, by rejecting any thing foreign to the spirit of elegance and refinement which should characterize the landscape of the most tasteful country residence — a landscape in which all that is graceful and beautiful in nature is preserved — all her most perfect forms and most harmonious lines — but with that added refinement which high keeping and continual care confer on natural beauty, without impairing its innate spirit of freedom, or the truth and freshness of its intrinsic character. A planted elm of fifty years, which stands in the midst of the smooth lawn before yonder mansion, its long graceful branches towering upwards like an

antique classical vase, and then sweeping to the ground with a curve as beautiful as the falling spray of a fountain, has all the freedom of character of its best prototypes in the wild woods, with a refinement and a perfection of symmetry which it would be next to impossible to find in a wild tree. Let us take it then as the type of all true art in landscape gardening, which selects from natural materials that abound in any country, its best sylvan features, and by giving them a better opportunity than they could otherwise obtain, brings about a higher beauty of development and a more perfect expression than nature itself offers. Study landscape in nature more, and the gardens and their catalogues less, is our advice to the rising generation of planters, who wish to embellish their places in the best and purest taste.

## CHAPTER XII

### *HINTS TO RURAL IMPROVERS \**

**O**NE of the most striking proofs of the progress of refinement in the United States is the rapid increase of taste for ornamental gardening and rural embellishment in all the older portions of the northern and middle states.

It cannot be denied, that the tasteful improvement of a country residence is both one of the most agreeable and the most natural recreations that can occupy a cultivated mind. With all the interest and, to many, all the excitement of the more seductive amusements of society, it has the incalculable advantage of fostering only the purest feelings, and (unlike many other occupations of business men) refining, instead of hardening the heart.

The great German poet, Goethe, says —

“Happy the man who hath escaped the town,  
Him did an angel bless when he was born.”

This apostrophe was addressed to the devotee of country life as a member of a class, in the old world, where men, for the most part, are confined to certain walks of life by the limits of caste, to a degree totally unknown in this country.

With us, country life is a leading object of nearly all men's desires. The wealthiest merchant looks upon his

\* Original date of July, 1848.

It is as interesting as it is surprising to observe how completely the point of view and even the use of the English language have changed in 70 years. No one now would think of addressing an essay to “rural improvers” nor of writing a chapter on “rural embellishments.” Even “ornamental gardening” has now an unpleasant sound. Yet Mr. Downing in his day used the English language with the utmost care and refinement. — F. A. W.



country-seat as the best ultimatum of his laborious days in the counting-house. The most indefatigable statesman dates, in his retirement, from his "Ashland," or his "Lindenswold." Webster has his "Marshfield," where his scientific agriculture is no less admirable than his profound eloquence in the Senate. Taylor's well ordered plantation is not less significant of the man, than the battle of Buena Vista. Washington Irving's cottage, on the Hudson, is even more poetical than any chapter of his Sketch Book; and Cole, the greatest of our landscape painters, had his rural home under the very shadow of the Catskills.

This is well. In the United States, nature and domestic life are better than society and the manners of towns. Hence all sensible men gladly escape, earlier or later, and partially or wholly, from the turmoil of the cities. Hence the dignity and value of country life is every day augmenting. And hence the enjoyment of landscape or ornamental gardening — which, when in pure taste, may properly be called a more refined kind of nature, — is every day becoming more and more widely diffused.

Those who are not as conversant as ourselves with the statistics of horticulture and rural architecture, have no just idea of the rapid multiplication of pretty cottages and villas in many parts of North America. The vast web of railroads which now interlaces the continent, though really built for the purposes of trade, cannot wholly escape doing some duty for the Beautiful as well as the Useful. Hundreds and thousands, formerly obliged to live in the crowded streets of cities, now find themselves able to enjoy a country cottage, several miles distant, the old notions of time and space being half annihilated; and these suburban cottages enable the busy citizen to breathe freely, and keep alive his love for nature, till the time shall come when he shall have wrung out of the nervous hand of commerce enough means to enable him to realize his ideal of the "retired life" of an American landed proprietor.

The number of our country residences which are laid out, and kept at a high point of ornamental gardening, is cer-

tainly not very large, though it is continually increasing. But we have no hesitation in saying that the aggregate sum annually expended in this way for the last five years, in North America, is not exceeded in any country in the world save one.

England ranks before all other countries in the perfection of its landscape gardening; and enormous, almost incredible sums have been expended by her wealthier class upon their rural improvements. But the taste of England is, we have good reasons for believing, at its maximum; and the expenditure of the aristocracy is, of late, chiefly devoted to keeping up the existing style of their parks and pleasure grounds. In this country, it is quite surprising how rapid is the creation of new country residences, and how large is the aggregate amount continually expended in the construction of houses and grounds, of a character more or less ornamental.

Granting all this, it cannot be denied that there are also, in the United States, large sums of money — many millions of dollars — annually, most unwisely and injudiciously expended in these rural improvements. While we gladly admit that there has been a surprising and gratifying advance in taste within the last ten years, we are also forced to confess that there are countless specimens of bad taste, and hundreds of examples where a more agreeable and satisfactory result might have been attained at one-half the cost.

Is it not, therefore, worth while to inquire a little more definitely what are the obstacles that lie in the way of forming satisfactory, tasteful, and agreeable country residences?

The common reply to this question, when directly put in the face of any signal example of failure is — “Oh, Mr. — is a man of no taste!” There is, undoubtedly, often but too much truth in this clean cut at the æsthetic capacities of the unlucky improver. But it by no means follows that it is always true. A man may have taste, and yet if he trusts to his own powers of direction, signally fail in tasteful improvements.

We should say that two grand errors are the fertile causes

of all the failures in the rural improvements of the United States at the present moment.

The first error lies in supposing that good taste is a natural gift, which springs heaven-born into perfect existence — needing no cultivation or improvement. The second is in supposing that taste alone is sufficient to the production of extensive or complete works in architecture or landscape gardening.

A lively sensibility to the beautiful, is a natural faculty, mistaken by more than half the world for good taste itself. But good taste, in the true meaning of the terms, or, more strictly, correct taste, only exists where sensibility to the beautiful, and good judgment, are combined in the same mind. Thus, a person may have a delicate organization, which will enable him to receive pleasure from everything that possesses grace or beauty, but with it so little power of discrimination as to be unable to select among many pleasing objects, those which, under given circumstances, are the most beautiful, harmonious, or fitting. Such a person may be said to have natural sensibility, or fine perceptions, but not good taste; the latter belongs properly to one who, among many beautiful objects, rapidly compares, discriminates, and gives due rank to each, according to its merit.

Now, although that delicacy of organization, usually called taste, is a natural gift, which can no more be acquired than hearing can be by a deaf man, yet, in most persons, this sensibility to the beautiful may be cultivated and ripened into good taste by the study and comparison of beautiful productions in nature and art.

This is precisely what we wish to insist upon, to all persons about to commence rural embellishments, who have not a cultivated or just taste; but only sensibility, or what they would call a natural taste.

Three-fourths of all the building and ornamental gardening of America, hitherto, have been amateur performances — often the productions of persons who, with abundant natural sensibility, have taken no pains to cultivate it and

form a correct, or even a good taste, by studying and comparing the best examples already in existence in various parts of this or other countries. Now the study of the best productions in the fine arts is not more necessary to the success of the young painter and sculptor than that of buildings and grounds to the amateur or professional improver, who desires to improve a country residence well and tastefully. In both cases comparison, discrimination, the use of the reasoning faculty, educate the natural delicacy of perception into taste, more or less just and perfect, and enable it not only to arrive at beauty, but to select the most beautiful for the end in view.\*

There are at the present moment, without going abroad, opportunities of cultivating a taste in landscape gardening, quite sufficient to enable any one of natural sensibility to the beautiful, combined with good reasoning powers, to arrive at that point which may be considered good taste. There are, indeed, few persons who are aware how instructive and interesting to an amateur, a visit to all the finest country residences of the older States, would be at the present moment. The study of books on taste is by no means to be neglected by the novice in rural embellishment; but the practical illustrations of different styles and principles, to be found in the best cottage and villa residences, are far more convincing and instructive to most minds, than lessons taught in any other mode whatever.

We shall not, therefore, hesitate to commend a few of the most interesting places to the study of the tasteful improver. By the expenditure of the necessary time and money to examine and compare thoroughly such places, he will undoubtedly save himself much unnecessary outlay; he will be able to seize and develop many beauties which would otherwise be overlooked; and, most of all, he will be able to avoid the exhibition of that crude and uncultivated taste, which characterizes the attempts of the majority of

\* Were Mr. Downing making his plea to the generation now living he would certainly insist on the services of the trained landscape architect.  
— F. A. W.

beginners, who rather know how to enjoy beautiful grounds than how to go to work to produce them.

For that species of suburban cottage or villa residence which is most frequent within the reach of persons of moderate fortunes, the environs of Boston afford the finest examples in the Union. Averaging from five to twenty acres, they are usually laid out with taste, are well planted with a large variety of trees and shrubs, and above all, are exquisitely kept. As a cottage ornée, there are few places in America more perfect than the grounds of Colonel Perkins, or of Thos. Lee., Esq., at Brookline, near Boston. The latter is especially remarkable for the beauty of the lawn, and the successful management of rare trees and shrubs, and is a most excellent study for the suburban landscape gardener. There are many other places in that neighborhood abounding with interest; but the great feature of the gardens of Boston lies rather in their horticultural than their artistic merit. In forcing and skilful cultivation, they still rank before any other of the country. Mr. Cushing's residence, near Watertown, has long been celebrated in this respect.

An amateur who wishes to study trees, should visit the fine old places in the neighborhood of Philadelphia. A couple of days spent at the Bartram Garden, the Hamilton Place, and many of the old estates bordering the Schuylkill, will make him familiar with rare and fine trees, such as *Salisburias*, *Magnolias*, *Virgilias*, etc., of a size and beauty of growth that will not only fill him with astonishment, but convince him what effects may be produced by planting. As a specimen of a cottage residence of the first class, exquisitely kept, there are also few examples in America more perfect than Mrs. Camac's grounds, four or five miles from Philadelphia.

For landscape gardening, on a large scale, and in its best sense, there are no places in America which compare with those on the east bank of the Hudson, between Hyde Park and the town of Hudson. The extent of the grounds, and their fine natural advantages of wood and lawn, combined

with their grand and beautiful views, and the admirable manner in which these natural charms are heightened by art, place them far before any other residences in the United States in picturesque beauty. In a strictly horticultural sense, they are, perhaps, as much inferior to the best places about Boston as they are superior to them in the beauty of landscape gardening and picturesque effect.

Among these places, those which enjoy the highest reputation, are Montgomery Place, the seat of Mrs. Edward Livingston, Blithewood, the seat of R. Donaldson, Esq., and Hyde Park, the seat of W. Langdon, Esq. The first is remarkable for its extent, for the wonderful variety of scenery — wood, water, and gardenesque — which it embraces, and for the excellent general keeping of the grounds. The second is a fine illustration of great natural beauty, — a mingling of the graceful and grand in scenery, — admirably treated and heightened by art. Hyde Park is almost too well known to need more than a passing notice. It is a noble site, greatly enhanced in interest lately, by the erection of a fine new mansion.

The student or amateur in landscape gardening, who wishes to examine two places as remarkable for breadth and dignity of effect as any in America, will not fail to go to the Livingston Manor, seven miles east of Hudson, and to Rensselaerwyck, a few miles from Albany, on the eastern shore. The former has the best kept and most extensive lawn in the Union; and the latter, with five or six miles of gravelled walks and drives, within its own boundaries, exhibits some of the cleverest illustrations of practical skill in laying out grounds that we remember to have seen.

If no person, about to improve a country residence, would expend a dollar until he had visited and carefully studied, at least twenty places of the character of these which we have thus pointed out, we think the number of specimens of bad taste, or total want of taste, would be astonishingly diminished. We could point to half a dozen examples within our own knowledge, where ten days spent by their proprietors in examining what had already been done in

some of the best specimens of building and gardening in the country, could not but have prevented their proprietors from making their places absolutely hideous, and throwing away ten, twenty, or thirty thousand dollars. Ignorance is not bliss, nor is it economy, in improving a country-seat.

We think, also, there can scarcely be a question that an examination of the best examples of taste in rural improvement at home, is far more instructive to an American, than an inspection of the finest country places in Europe; and this, chiefly, because a really successful example at home is based upon republican modes of life, enjoyment, and expenditure, — which are almost the reverse of those of an aristocratic government. For the same reason, we think those places most instructive, and best worthy general study in this country, which realize most completely our ideal of refined country life in America. To do this, it is by no means necessary to have baronial possessions, or a mansion of vast extent. No more should be attempted than can be done well, and in perfect harmony with our habits, mode of life, and domestic institutions. Hence, smaller suburban residences, like those in the neighborhood of Boston, are, perhaps, better models, or studies for the public generally, than our grander and more extensive seats; mainly because they are more expressive of the means and character of the majority of those of our countrymen whose intelligence and refinement lead them to find their happiness in country life. It is better to attempt a small place, and attain perfect success, than to fail in one of greater extent.

Having pointed out what we consider indispensable to be done, to assist in forming, if possible, a correct taste in those who have only a natural delicacy of organization, which they miscall taste, we may also add that good taste, or even a perfect taste, is often by no means sufficient for the production of really extensive works of rural architecture or landscape gardening.

“Taste,” says Cousin, in his *Philosophy of the Beautiful*, “is a faculty indolent and passive; it reposes tranquilly in

the contemplation of the Beautiful in Nature. Genius is proud and free; genius creates and reconstructs."

He, therefore (whether as amateur or professor), who hopes to be successful in the highest degree, in the arts of refined building or landscape gardening, must possess not only taste to appreciate the beautiful, but genius to produce it. Do we not often see persons who have for half their lives enjoyed a reputation for correct taste, suddenly lose it when they attempt to embody it in some practical manner? Such persons have only the "indolent and passive," and not the "free and creative faculty." Yet there are a thousand little offices of supervision and control, where the taste alone may be exercised with the happiest results upon a country place. It is by no means a small merit to prevent any violations of good taste, if we cannot achieve any great work of genius. And we are happy to be able to say that we know many amateurs in this country who unite with a refined taste a creative genius, or practical ability to carry beautiful improvements into execution, which has already enriched the country with beautiful examples of rural residences; and we can congratulate ourselves that, along with other traits of the Anglo-Saxon mind, we have by no means failed in our inheritance of that fine appreciation of rural beauty, and the power of developing it, which the English have so long possessed.

We hope the number of those who are able to enjoy this most refined kind of happiness will every day grow more and more numerous; and that it may do so, we are confident we can give no better advice than again to commend beginners, before they lay a corner stone, or plant a tree, to visit and study at least a dozen or twenty of the acknowledged best specimens of good taste in America.



## CHAPTER XIII

### *ON THE MISTAKES OF CITIZENS IN COUNTRY LIFE \**

**N**O one loves the country more sincerely or welcomes new devotees to the worship of its pure altars more warmly than ourselves. To those who bring here hearts capable of understanding the lessons of truth and beauty which the Good Creator has written so legibly on all his works; to those in whose nature is implanted a sentiment that interprets the tender and the loving, as well as the grand and sublime lessons of the universe, what a life full of joy, and beauty, and inspiration, is that of the country; to such,

— “The deep recess of dusky groves,  
Or forest where the deer securely roves,  
The fall of waters and the song of birds,  
And hills that echo to the distant herds,  
Are luxuries, excelling all the glare  
The world can boast, and her chief fav’rites share.”

There are those who rejoice in our Anglo-Saxon inheritance of the love of conquest, and the desire for boundless territory, — who exult in the “manifest destiny” of the race, to plant the standard of the eagle or the lion in every soil, and every zone of the earth’s surface. We rejoice much more in the love of country life, the enjoyment of nature, and the taste for rural beauty, which we also inherit from our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, and to which, more than all else, they owe so many of the peculiar virtues of the race.

With us as a people retirement to country life must come to be the universal pleasure of the nation. The successful

\* Original date of January, 1849.



FIG. 33. SPRINGTIME IN THE WOODS - TRILLIUMS

statesman, professional man, merchant, trader, mechanic, all look to it as the only way of enjoying the *otium cum dignitate*; and the great beauty and extent of our rural scenery, as well as the absence of any great national capital, with its completeness of metropolitan life, must render the country the most satisfactory place for passing a part of every man's days, who has the power of choice.

It is not to be denied, however, that "retirement to the country," which is the beau ideal of all the busy and successful citizens of our towns, is not always found to be the Elysium which it has been fondly imagined. No doubt there are good reasons why nothing in this world should afford perfect and uninterrupted happiness.

"The desire of the moth for the star"

might cease, if parks and pleasure grounds could fill up the yearnings of human nature, so as to leave no aspirations for futurity.

But this is not our present meaning. What we would say is that numbers are disappointed with country life and perhaps leave it in disgust without reason either from mistaken views of its nature, of their own incapacities for enjoying it, or a want of practical ability to govern it.

We might throw our views into a more concrete shape, perhaps, by saying that the disappointments in country life arise chiefly from two causes. The first is from expecting too much; the second, from undertaking too much.

There are, we should judge from observation, many citizens who retire to the country, after ten or twenty years' hard service in the business and society of towns, and who carry with them the most romantic ideas of country life. They expect to pass their time in wandering over daisy-spangled meadows, and by the side of meandering streams. They will listen to the singing of birds, and find a perpetual feast of enjoyment in the charm of hills and mountains. Above all, they have an extravagant notion of the purity and the simplicity of country life. All its intercourse, as well as all its pleasures, are to be so charmingly pure, pastoral, and poetical!

What a disappointment to find that there is prose even in country life, — that meadows do not give up their sweet incense, or corn-fields wave their rich harvests without care, — that “work-folks” are often unfaithful, and oxen stubborn, even a hundred miles from the smoke of towns or the intrigues of great cities.

Another and a large class of those citizens who expect too much in the country are those who find to their astonishment that the country is dull. They really admire nature and love rural life, but though they are ashamed to confess it they are “bored to death,” and leave the country in despair.

This is a mistake which grows out of their want of knowledge of themselves, and, we may add, of human nature generally. Man is a social, as well as a reflective and devout being. He must have friends to share his pleasures, to sympathize in his tastes, to enjoy with him the delights of his home, or these become wearisome and insipid. Cowper has well expressed the want of this large class and their suffering when left wholly to themselves: —

“I praise the Frenchman, his remark was shrewd, —  
How sweet, how passing sweet, is solitude!  
*But give me still a friend, in my retreat,*  
*Whom I may whisper — solitude is sweet.”*

The mistake made by this class, is that of thinking only of the beauty of the scenery where they propose to reside and leaving out of sight the equal charms of good society. To them, the latter, both by nature and habit, is a necessity, not to be wholly waived for converse of babbling brooks. And since there are numberless localities where one may choose a residence in a genial and agreeable country neighborhood, the remedy for this species of discontent is as plain as a pikestaff. One can scarcely expect friends to follow one into country seclusion if one will, for the sake of the picturesque, settle on the banks of the Winnipissiogee. These latter spots are for poets, artists, naturalists; men, between whom and nature there is an intimacy of a wholly

different kind, and who find in the structure of a moss or the flight of a water fowl, the text to a whole volume of inspiration.\*

The third class of the disappointed, consists of those who are astonished at the cost of life in the country. They left town not only for the healthful breezes of the hilltops, but also to make a small income do the business of a large one. To their great surprise they find the country dear. Every thing they grow on their land costs them as much as when bought (because they produce it with hired labor); and every thing they do to improve their estate calls for a mint of money because with us labor is always costly. But in fact the great secret of the matter is this—they have brought as many as possible of their town habits into the country, and find that a moderate income, applied in this way, gives less here than in town. To live economically in the country one must adopt the rustic habits of country life. Labor must be understood, closely watched, and even shared, to give the farm products at a cost likely to increase the income; and *patés de foie gras*, or *perigord pies* must be given up for boiled mutton and turnips. (And, between them and us, it is not so difficult as might be imagined, when the mistress of the house is a woman of genius, to give as refined an expression to country life with the latter as the former. The way of doing things is, in these matters, as important as the means.)

Now a word or two, touching the second source of evil in country life, — undertaking too much.

There is, apparently, as much fascination in the idea of a large landed estate as in the eye of a serpent. Notwithstanding our institutions, our habits, above all the continual distribution of our fortunes, every thing, in short, teaching us so plainly the folly of improving large landed estates, human nature and the love of distinction, every now and then, triumph over all. What a homily might there not be written on the extravagance of Americans! We can point at once to half a dozen examples of country residences

\* How great the change at Winnepissauke since that day! — F. A. W.

that have cost between one and two hundred thousand dollars; and every one of which either already has been, or soon will be, enjoyed by others than those who constructed them. This is the great and glaring mistake of our wealthy men, ambitious of taste, — that of supposing that only by large places and great expenditures can the problem of rural beauty and enjoyment be solved. The truth is, that with us, a large fortune does not and cannot (at least at the present time) produce the increased enjoyment which it does abroad. Large estates, large houses, large establishments, only make slaves of their possessors; for the service, to be done daily by those who must hold aloft this dazzling canopy of wealth, is so indifferently performed, servants are so time-serving and unworthy in this country, where intelligent labor finds independent channels for itself, that the lord of the manor finds his life overburdened with the drudgery of watching his drudges.

Hence the true philosophy of living in America is to be found in moderate desires, a moderate establishment, and moderate expenditures. We have seen so many more examples of success in those of even less moderate size, that we had almost said, with Cowley "a little cheerful house, a little company, and a very little feast." \*

But among those who undertake too much, by far the largest class is that whose members do so through ignorance of what is to be done.

Although the world is pretty well aware of the existence of professional builders and planters, still the majority of those who build and plant in this country do it without the advice of experienced persons. There is apparently a latent conviction at the bottom of every man's heart that he can build a villa or a cottage and lay out its grounds in a more perfect, or, at least, a much more satisfactory manner than any of his predecessors or contemporaries. Fatal delusion! One may plead his own case in law, or even write a lay sermon, like Sir Walter Scott, with more chance of success than he will have in realizing, in solid walls, the perfect

\* An extremely sound philosophy for any land or any age. — Editor.

model of beauty and convenience that floats dimly in his head. We mean this to apply chiefly to the production as a work of art.

As a matter of economy, it is still worse. If the improver selects an experienced architect and contracts with a responsible and trustworthy builder he knows within twenty per cent at the farthest of what his edifice will cost. If he undertakes to play the amateur, and corrects and revises his work, as most amateurs do, while the house is in progress, he will have the mortification of paying twice as much as he should have done, without any just satisfaction at last.

What is the result of this course of proceeding of the new resident in the country? That he has obtained a large and showy house, of which, if he is alive to improvement, he will live to regret the bad taste, and that he has laid the foundation of expenditures far beyond his income.

He finds himself now in a dilemma, of which there are two horns. One of them is the necessity of laying out and keeping up large pleasure grounds, gardens, etc., to correspond to the style and character of his house. The other is to allow the house to remain in the midst of beggarly surroundings of meadow and stubble; or, at the most, with half executed and miserably kept grounds on every side of it.

Nothing can be more unsatisfactory than either of these positions. If he is seduced into expenditures *en grand seigneur* to keep up the style in which the mansion or villa has been erected, he finds that instead of the peace of mind and enjoyment which he expected to find in the country he is perpetually nervous about the tight place in his income, — constantly obliged to make an effort to maintain that which, when maintained, gives no more real pleasure than a residence on a small scale.

If, on the other hand, he stops short, like a prudent man, at the mighty show of figures at the bottom of the builder's accounts, and leaves all about in a crude and unfinished condition, then he has the mortification, if possessed of the least taste, of knowing that all the grace with which he

meant to surround his country home, has eluded his grasp — that he lives in the house of a noble, set in the fields of a sluggard. This he feels the more keenly after a walk over the grounds of some wiser or more fortunate neighbor who has been able to sweep the whole circle of taste, and better advised, has realized precisely that which has escaped the reach of our unfortunate improver. Is it any marvel that the latter should find himself disappointed in the pleasures of a country life?

Do we thus portray the mistakes of country life in order to dissuade persons from retiring? Far from it. There is no one who would more willingly exhibit its charms in the most glowing colors. But we would not lure the traveller into an Arcadia without telling him that there are not only golden fruits, but also others, which may prove Sodom-apples if ignorantly plucked. We would not hang garlands of flowers over dangerous pits and fearful chasms. It is rather our duty and pleasure loudly to warn those who are likely to fall into such errors, and to open their eyes to the danger that lies in their paths; for the country is really full of interest to those who are fitted to understand it; nature is full of beauty to those who approach her simply and devoutly; and rural life is full of pure and happy influences, to those who are wise enough rightly to accept and enjoy them.

What most retired citizens need in country life are objects of real interest, society, occupation.

We place first, something of permanent interest; for, after all, this is the great desideratum. All men, with the fresh breath of the hay fields of boyhood floating through their memory, fancy that farming itself is the grand occupation and panacea of country life. This is a profound error. There is no permanent interest in any pursuit which we are not successful in; and farming, at least in the older states, is an art as difficult as navigation. We mean by this, profitable farming, for there is no constant satisfaction in any other; and though some of the best farmers in the Union are retired citizens, yet not more than one in



twenty succeeds in making his land productive. It is well enough, therefore, for the citizen about retiring, to look upon this resource with a little diffidence.\*

If our novice is fond of horticulture, there is some hope for him. In the first place, if he pursues it as an amusement it is inexhaustible, because there is no end to new fruits and flowers, or to the combinations which he may produce by their aid. And besides this, he need not draw heavily on his banker, or purchase a whole township to attain his object. Only grant a downright taste for fruits and flowers, and a man may have occupation and amusement for years in an hundred feet square of good soil.

Among the happiest men in the country, as we have hinted, are those who find an intense pleasure in nature, either as artists or naturalists. To such men there is no weariness and they should choose a country residence, not so much with a view to what can be made by improving it, as to where it is, what grand and beautiful scenery surrounds it and how much inspiration its neighborhood will offer them.

Men of society, as we have already said, should, in settling in the country, never let go the cord that binds them to their fellows. A suburban country life will most nearly meet their requirements; or, at least, they should select a site where some friends of congenial minds have already made a social sunshine in the "wilderness of woods and forests."

Above all we should counsel all persons not to underrate the cost of building and improving in the country. Do not imagine that a villa, or even a cottage ornée, takes care of itself. If you wish for rural beauty at a cheap rate, either on the grand or the moderate scale, choose a spot where the two features of home scenery are trees and grass. You may have five hundred acres of natural park — that is to say, fine old woods, tastefully opened, and threaded with walks and drives, for less cost, in preparation and annual outlay, than it will require to maintain five acres of arti-

\* This particular caution is more imperative in 1921 than in 1849. — F. A. W.

ficial pleasure grounds. A pretty little natural glen, filled with old trees and made alive by a clear perennial stream, is often a cheaper and more unwearying source of enjoyment than the gayest flower garden. Not that we mean to disparage beautiful parks, pleasure grounds, or flower-gardens; we only wish our readers about settling in the country to understand that they do not constitute the highest and most expressive kind of rural beauty, — as they certainly do the most expensive.

It is so hard to be content with simplicity! Why, we have seen thousands expended on a few acres of ground, and the result was, after all, only a showy villa, a greenhouse, and a flower garden, — not half so captivating to the man of true taste as a cottage embosomed in shrubbery, a little park filled with a few fine trees, a lawn kept short by a flock of favorite sheep, and a knot of flowers woven gayly together in the green turf of the terrace under the parlor windows. But the man of wealth so loves to astonish the admiring world by the display of riches, and it is so rare to find those who comprehend the charm of grace and beauty in their simple dress!

*Note.* — It seems certain that the attitude toward country life in America has greatly improved since Mr. Downing wrote this essay. Everybody understands better what country life, in its various forms, implies. Also the public taste in country living has risen by many degrees. — F. A. W.

## CHAPTER XIV

### *ON CITIZENS RETIRING TO THE COUNTRY \**

**I**N another essay we offered a few words to our readers on the subject of choosing a country seat. As the subject was only slightly touched upon we propose to say something more regarding it now.

There are few or no magnificent country seats in America, if we take as a standard such residences as Chatsworth, Woburn, Blenheim, and other well known English places — with parks a dozen miles round, and palaces in their midst larger than our largest public buildings. But any one who notices in the suburbs of our towns and cities, and on the borders of our great rivers and railroads, in the older parts of the Union, the rapidity with which cottages and villa residences are increasing, each one of which costs from three, to thirty or forty thousand dollars, will find that the aggregate amount of money expended in American rural homes, for the last ten years, is perhaps larger than has been spent in any part of the world. Our Anglo-Saxon nature leads our successful business men always to look forward to a home out of the city; and the ease with which freehold property may be obtained here offers every encouragement to the growth of the natural instinct for landed proprietorship.†

This large class of citizens turning country folk, which every season's revolution is increasing, which every successful business year greatly augments, and every fortune made in California helps to swell in number, is one which, perhaps, spends its means more freely, and with more of the feeling of getting its full value, than any other class.

\* Original date of February, 1852.

† Such country estates have multiplied many fold and have increased enormously in magnificence by the expenditure of vast sums of money in the 69 years since this essay was written. — F. A. W.

But do they get its full value? Are there not many who are disgusted with the country after a few years' trial, mainly because they find country places and country life as they have tried them more expensive than a residence in town? And is there not something that may be done to warn the new beginners of the dangers of the voyage of pleasure on which they are about to embark with the fullest faith that it is all smooth water?

We think so: and as we are daily brought into contact with precisely this class of citizens, seeking for and building country places, we should be glad to be able to offer some useful hints to those who are not too wise to find them of value

Perhaps the foundation of all the miscalculations that arise, as to expenditure in forming a country residence, is that citizens are in the habit of thinking everything in the country cheap. Land in the town is sold by the foot, in the country by the acre. The price of a good house in town is, perhaps, three times the cost of one of the best farms in the country. The town buys everything: the country raises everything. To live on your own estate, be it one acre or a thousand, to have your own milk, butter and eggs, to raise your own chickens and gather your own strawberries, with nature to keep the account instead of your grocer and market-woman, that is something like a rational life; and more than rational, it must be cheap. So argues the citizen about retiring, not only to enjoy his *otium cum dignitate*, but to make a thousand dollars of his income produce him more of the comforts of life than two thousand did before.

Well, he goes into the country. He buys a farm (run down with poor tenants and bad tillage). He builds a new house, with his own ignorance instead of architect and master-builder, and is cheated roundly by those who take advantage of this masterly ignorance in the matter of bricks and mortar; or he repairs an old house at the full cost of a new one, and has an unsatisfactory dwelling forever afterwards. He undertakes high farming, and knowing nothing

of the practical economy of husbandry, every bushel of corn that he raises costs him the price of a bushel and a half in the market. Used in town to a neat and orderly condition of his premises, he is disgusted with old tottering fences, half drained fields and worn-out pastures, and employs all the laboring force of the neighborhood to put his grounds in good order.

Now there is no objection to all this for its own sake. On the contrary, good buildings, good fences, and rich pasture fields are what especially delight us in the country. What then is the reason that, as the country place gets to wear a smiling aspect, its citizen owner begins to look serious and unhappy? Why is it that country life does not satisfy and content him? Is the country, which all poets and philosophers have celebrated as the Arcadia of this world, — is the country treacherous? Is nature a cheat, and do seed-time and harvest conspire against the peace of mind of the retired citizen?

Alas! It is a matter of money. Everything seems to be a matter of money now-a-days. The country life of the old world, of the poets and romancers, is cheap. The country life of our republic is dear. It is for the good of the many that labor should be high, and it is high labor that makes country life heavy and oppressive to such men — only because it shows a balance, increasing year after year, on the wrong side of the ledger. Here is the source of all the trouble and dissatisfaction in what may be called the country life of gentlemen amateurs, or citizens, in this country — “it don’t pay.” Land is cheap, nature is beautiful, the country is healthy, and all these conspire to draw our well-to-do citizen into the country. But labor is dear, experience is dearer, and a series of experiments in unprofitable crops the dearest of all; and our citizen friend himself, as we have said, is in the situation of a man who has set out on a delightful voyage, on a smooth sea, and with a cheerful ship’s company; but who discovers, also, that the ship has sprung a leak — not large enough to make it necessary to call all hands to the pump — not

large enough perhaps to attract anybody's attention but his own, but quite large enough to make it certain that he must leave her or be swamped — and quite large enough to make his voyage a serious piece of business.

Everything which a citizen does in the country, costs him an incredible sum. In Europe (heaven save the masses), you may have the best of laboring men for twenty or thirty cents a day. Here you must pay them a dollar,\* at least our amateur must, though the farmers contrive to get their labor for eight or ten dollars a month and board. The citizen's home once built, he looks upon all heavy expenditures as over; but how many hundreds, perhaps thousands, has he not paid for out-buildings, for fences, for roads, etc. Cutting down yonder hill, which made an ugly blotch in the view, — it looked like a trifling task; yet there were \$500 swept clean out of his bank account, and there seems almost nothing to show for it. You would not believe now that any hill ever stood there — or at least that nature had not arranged it all (as you feel she ought to have done), just as you see it. Your favorite cattle and horses have died, and the flock of sheep have been sadly diminished by the dogs, all to be replaced — and a careful account of the men's time, labor and manure on the grain fields, shows that for some reason that you cannot understand, the crop — which is a fair one, has actually cost you a trifle more than it is worth in a good market.

To cut a long story short, the larger part of our citizens who retire upon a farm to make it a country residence, are not aware of the fact that capital cannot be profitably employed on land in the Atlantic states *without a thoroughly practical knowledge of farming*.† A close and syste-

\* Think of those exorbitant days, when farm laborers got a dollar for twelve hours' work! — F. A. W.

† Mr. Downing, after the fashion of his time, used italics very freely in his essays. Following the taste of our time I have put most of his italics into Roman type; but in this case I have allowed it to stand as he wrote it, sorry only that I cannot underscore his statement further. His observation is just as true and just as important now as it was in 1852. — F. A. W.

matic economy, upon a good soil, may enable, and does enable some gentlemen farmers that we could name, to make a good profit out of their land, but citizens who launch boldly into farming, hiring farm laborers at high prices, and trusting operations to others that should be managed under the master's eye, are very likely to find their farms a sinking fund that will drive them back into business again.

To be happy in any business or occupation (and country life on a farm is a matter of business), we must have some kind of success in it; and there is no success without profit, and no profit without practical knowledge of farming.

The lesson that we would deduce from these reflections is this; that no mere amateur should buy a large farm for a country residence with the expectation of finding pleasure and profit in it for the rest of his life, unless, like some citizens that we have known — rare exceptions — they have a genius for all manner of business, and can master the whole of farming, as they would learn a running hand in six easy lessons. Farming, in the older states, where the natural wealth of the soil has been exhausted, is not a profitable business for amateurs — but quite the reverse. And a citizen who has a sufficient income without farming had better not damage it by engaging in so expensive an amusement.

“But we must have something to do; we have been busy near all our lives, and cannot retire into the country to fold our hands and sit in the sunshine to be idle.” Precisely so. But you need not therefore ruin yourself on a large farm. Do not be ambitious of being great landed proprietors. Assume that you need occupation and interest, and buy a small piece of ground — a few acres only — as few as you please — but without any regard for profit. Leave that to those who have learned farming in a more practical school. You think, perhaps, that you can find nothing to do on a few acres of ground. But that is the greatest of mistakes. A half a dozen acres, the capacities of which are fully developed, will give you more pleasure than five



FIG. 34. WELL-GRADED, WELL-PLANTED GROUNDS



hundred poorly cultivated. And the advantage for you is that you can, upon your few acres, spend just as little or just as much as you please. If you wish to be prudent, lay out your little estate in a simple way, with grass and trees, and a few walks, and a single man may then take care of it. If you wish to indulge your taste, you may fill it with shrubberies, and arboretums, and conservatories, and flower-gardens, till every tree and plant and fruit in the whole vegetable kingdom, of really superior beauty and interest, is in your collection. Or, if you wish to turn a penny, you will find it easier to take up certain fruits or plants and grow them to high perfection so as to command a profit in the market than you will to manage the various operations of a large farm. We could point to ten acres of ground from which a larger income has been produced than from any farm of five hundred acres in the country. Gardening, too, offers more variety of interest to a citizen than farming; its operations are less rude and toilsome, and its pleasures more immediate and refined. Citizens, ignorant of farming, should therefore buy small places rather than large ones, if they wish to consult their own true interest and happiness.

But some of our readers who have tried the thing may say that it is a very expensive thing to settle oneself and get well established, even on a small place in the country. And so it is, if we proceed upon the fallacy, as we have said, that everything in the country is cheap. Labor is dear; it costs you dearly to-day, and it will cost you dearly tomorrow and the next year. Therefore in selecting a site for a home in the country always remember to choose a site where nature has done as much as possible for you. Don't say to yourself as many have done before you — "Oh! I want occupation, and I rather like the new place — raw and naked though it may be. I will create a paradise for myself. I will cut down yonder hill that intercepts the view, I will level and slope more gracefully yonder rude bank, I will terrace this rapid descent, I will make a lake in yonder hollow." Yes, all this you may do for occu-

pation, and find it very delightful occupation too, if you have the income of Mr. Astor. Otherwise, after you have spent thousands in creating your paradise and chance to go to some friend who has bought all the graceful undulations and sloping lawns and sheets of water, natural, ready made — as they may be bought in thousands of purely natural places in America, for a few hundred dollars, — it will give you a species of pleasure-ground-dyspepsia to see how foolishly you have wasted your money. And this more especially when you find, as the possessor of the most finished place in America finds, that he has no want of occupation, and that far from being finished, he has only begun to elicit the highest beauty, keeping and completeness of which his place is capable.

It would be easy to say a great deal more in illustration of the mistakes continually made by citizens going into the country; of their false ideas of the cost of doing everything; of the profits of farming; of their own talent for making an income from the land, and their disappointment, growing out of a failure of all their theories and expectations. But we have perhaps said enough to cause some of our readers about to take the step to consider whether they mean to look upon country life as a luxury they are willing to pay so much a year for, or as a means of adding something to their incomes. Even in the former case they are likely to underrate the cost of the luxury, and in the latter they must set about it with the frugal and industrial habits of the real farmer, or they will fail. The safest way is to attempt but a modest residence at first, and let the more elaborate details be developed, if at all, only when we have learned how much country life costs, and how far the expenditure is a wise one. Fortunately it is art and not nature which costs money in the country, and therefore the beauty of lovely scenery and fine landscapes (the right to enjoy miles of which may often be had for a trifle), in connection with a very modest and simple place, will give more lasting satisfaction than gardens and pleasure grounds innumerable. Persons of moderate means should, for this reason, always

secure, in their fee simple, as much as possible of natural beauty, and undertake the elaborate improvement of only small places which will not become a burden to them. Millionaires, of course, we leave out of the question. They may do what they like. But most Americans buying a country place may take it for their creed, that

Man wants but little land below,  
Nor wants that little dear.

## CHAPTER XV

### *HOW TO CHOOSE A SITE FOR A COUNTRY SEAT \**

**H**OW to choose the site for a country house is a subject now occupying the thoughts of many of our countrymen, and therefore is not undeserving a few words from us at the present moment.

The greater part of those who build country seats in the United States are citizens who retire from the active pursuits of town to enjoy, in the most rational way possible, the fortunes accumulated there, that is to say in the creation of beautiful and agreeable rural homes.

Whatever may be the natural taste of this class, their avocations have not permitted them to become familiar with the difficulties to be encountered in making a new place or the most successful way of accomplishing all that they propose to themselves. Hence we not unfrequently see a very complete house surrounded for years by very unfinished and meagre grounds. Weary with the labor and expense of levelling earth, opening roads and walks, and clothing a naked place with new plantations, all of which he finds far less easily accomplished than building brick walls in the city, the once sanguine improver often abates his energy, and loses his interest in the embellishment of his grounds before his plans are half perfected.

All this arises from a general disposition to underrate the difficulty and cost of making plantations and laying the groundwork of a complete country residence. Landscape gardening, where all its elements require to be newly arranged, where the scenery of a place requires to be almost

\* Original date of December, 1847. The problem is still a live one. But the old English term "country seat" has disappeared from American use. We now say "country place," "country home," or some more pretentious persons speak of their "country estates." The average city man, however, prefers above all else to refer to "my farm." — F. A. W.

wholly created, is by no means either a cheap or rapid process. Labor and patience must be added to taste, time and money, before a bare site can be turned into smooth lawns and complete pleasure grounds.

The best advice which the most experienced landscape gardener can give an American about to select ground for a country residence is, therefore, to choose a site where there is natural wood, and where nature offers the greatest number of good features ready for a basis upon which to commence improvements.

We have already so often descanted on the superiority of trees and lawns to all other features of ornamental places untied that our readers are not, we trust, slow to side with us in a thorough appreciation of their charms.

Hence when a site for a country place is to be selected (after health and good neighborhood), the first points are, if possible, to secure a position where there is some existing wood, and where the ground is so disposed as to offer a natural surface for a fine lawn. These two points secured, half the battle is fought, for the framework or background of foliage being ready grown, immediate shelter, shade, and effect is given as soon as the house is erected; and a surface well shaped for a lawn (or one which requires but trifling alterations) once obtained, all the labor and cost of grading is avoided, and a single season's thorough preparation gives you velvet to walk about upon.

Some of our readers, no doubt, will say this is excellent advice, but unfortunately not easily followed. So many are forced to build on a bare site, "and begin at the beginning."

This is no doubt occasionally true, but in nine cases out of ten, in this country, our own observation has convinced us that the choice of a poor location is the result of local prejudice, or want of knowledge of the subject, rather than of necessity.

How frequently do we see men paying large prices for indifferent sites, when at a distance of half a mile there are one or more positions on which nature has lavished treas-

✓ ures of wood and water, and spread out undulating surfaces, which seem absolutely to court the finishing touches of the rural artist. Place a dwelling in such a site and it appropriates all nature's handiwork to itself in a moment. The masses of trees are easily broken into groups that have immediately the effect of old plantations, and all the minor details of shrubbery, walks, and flower and fruit gardens, fall gracefully and becomingly into their proper positions. Sheltered and screened and brought into harmony with the landscape, these finishing touches serve in turn to enhance the beauty and value of the original trees themselves.

We by no means wish to deter those who have an abundance of means, taste, enthusiasm and patience, from undertaking the creation of entire new scenery in their country residences. There are few sources of satisfaction more genuine and lasting than that of walking through extensive groves and plantations, all reared by one's own hands — to look on a landscape which one has transformed into leafy hills and wood-embowered slopes. We scarcely remember more real delight evinced by any youthful devotee of our favorite art, in all the fervor of his first enthusiasm, than has been expressed to us by one of our venerable ex-Presidents,\* now in a ripe old age, when showing us, at various times, fine old forest trees, oaks, hickories, etc., which have been watched by him in their entire cycle of development, from the naked seeds deposited in the soil by his own hands, to their now furrowed trunks and umbrageous heads!

But it must be confessed that it is throwing away a large part of one's life — and that too, more especially, when the cup of country pleasures is not brought to the lips till one's meridian is well nigh past — to take the whole business of making a landscape from the invisible carbon and oxygen waiting in soil and atmosphere, to be turned by the slow alchemy of ten or twenty summers' growth

\* Undoubtedly this refers to Mr. Downing's intimate friend, John Quincy Adams, to whom his book on "Landscape Gardening" was dedicated. — F. A. W.

into groves of weeping elms and groups of overshadowing oaks!

Those, therefore, who wish to start with the advantage of a good patrimony from nature will prefer to examine what mother Earth has to offer them in her choicest nooks before they determine on taking hold of some meagre scene where the woodman's axe and the ploughman's furrow have long ago obliterated all the original beauty of the landscape. If a place cannot be found well wooded, perhaps a fringe of wood or a background of forest foliage can be taken advantage of. These will give shelter and serve as a groundwork to help on the effects of the ornamental planter. We have seen a cottage or a villa site dignified and rendered attractive forever by the possession of even three or four fine trees of the original growth judiciously preserved and taken as the nucleus of a whole series of belts and minor plantations. ✓

There is another most striking advantage in the possession of considerable wooded surface, properly located, in a country residence. This is the seclusion and privacy of the walks and drives, which such bits of woodland afford. Walks, in open lawn, or even amid belts of shrubbery, are never felt to have that seclusion and comparative solitude which belong to the wilder aspect of woodland scenes. And no contrast is more agreeable than that from the open sunny brightness of the lawn and pleasure grounds, to the retirement and quiet of a woodland walk.

Again it is no small matter of consideration to many persons settling in the country, the production of picturesque effect, the working out of a realm of beauty of their own, without any serious inroads into their incomes. One's private walks and parterres, unluckily, cannot be had at the cost of one's daily bread and butter — though the Beautiful overtops the useful, as stars outshine farthing candles. But the difference of cost between keeping up a long series of walks, in a place mainly composed of flower-garden, shrubbery, and pleasure grounds, compared with another, where there are merely lawns and sylvan scenery, is like that

between maintaining a chancery suit, or keeping on pleasant terms with your best friend or favorite country neighbor. Open walks must be scrupulously neat, and broad sunshine and rich soil make weeds grow faster than a new city in the best "western diggins," and your gardener has no sooner put the series of walks in perfect order than he looks over his shoulder and beholds the enemy is there to be conquered over again. On the other hand woodland walks are swept and repaired in the spring, and like some of those gifted individuals, "born neat," they require no more attention than the rainbow to remain fresh and bright till the autumn leaves begin to drop again.

Our citizen reader, therefore, who wishes to enjoy his country seat as an elegant sylvan retreat with the greatest amount of beauty and enjoyment and the smallest care and expenditure will choose a place naturally well wooded, or where open glades and bits of lawn alternate with masses or groups, and, it may be, with extensive tracts of well-grown wood. A house once erected on such a site, the whole can very easily be turned into a charming labyrinth of beautiful and secluded drives and walks. And as our improver cultivates his eye and his taste, nature will certainly give him fresh hints; she will tell him how by opening a glade here, and piercing a thicket there, by making underwood occasionally give place to soft turf, so as to show fine trunks to the greatest advantage, and thereby bringing into more complete contrast some wilder and more picturesque dell, all the natural charms of a place may be heightened into a beauty far more impressive and significant than they originally possessed.

Why man's perception of the Beautiful seems clouded over in most uncultivated natures and is only brought out by a certain process of refining and mental culture, as the lapidary brings out, by polishing, all the rich play of colors in a stone that one passes by as a common pebble, we leave to the metaphysicians to explain. Certain it is that we see occasionally lamentable proofs of the fact in the treatment of nature's best features, by her untutored children. More than



one instance do we call to mind of settlers in districts of country where there are masses and great woods of trees that the druids would have worshipped for their grandeur sweeping them all down mercilessly with their axes, and then planting with the supremest satisfaction, a straight line of paltry saplings before their doors! It is like exchanging a neighborhood of proud and benevolent yeomanry, honest and free as the soil they spring from, for a file of sentinels or *gens d'armes*, that watch over one's outgoings and incomings, like a chief of police! \*

Most happily for our country and its beautiful rural scenery this spirit of destruction, under the rapid development of taste that is taking place among us, is very fast disappearing. "Woodman, spare that tree," is the choral sentiment that should be instilled and taught at the agricultural schools, and re-echoed by all the agricultural and horticultural societies in the land. If we have neither old castles nor old associations, we have at least, here and there, old trees that can teach us lessons of antiquity not less instructive and poetical than the ruins of a past age.

Our first hint, therefore, to persons about choosing a site for a country place is, in all possible cases, to look for a situation where there is some natural wood. With this for the warp — strong, rich, and permanent — you may embroider upon it all the gold threads of fruit and floral embellishment with an effect equally rapid and successful. Everything done upon such a groundwork will tell at once; and since there is no end to the delightful task of perfecting a country place, so long as there are thirty thousand species of plants known, and at least thirty millions of varied combinations of landscape scenery possible, we think there is little fear that the possessor of a country place will not find sufficient interest for the employment of his time, mind, and purse, if he really loves the subject, even though he find himself in possession of a fee-simple of a pretty number of acres of fine wood.

\* This fine passage reveals the nobility of the character of Andrew Jackson Downing most clearly and graciously. — F. A. W.

## CHAPTER XVI

### *HOW TO ARRANGE COUNTRY PLACES \**

**H**OW to lay out a country place? That is a question about which we and our readers might have many a long conversation, if we could be brought on familiar terms, colloquially speaking, with all parts of the Union where rural improvements are going on. As it is we shall touch on a few leading points this month which may be considered of universal application.

These cardinal points within the bounds of a country residence, are (taking health and pleasant locality for granted), convenience, comfort, or social enjoyment, and beauty; and we shall touch on them in a very rambling manner.

Innumerable are the mistakes of those novices in forming country places, who reverse the order of these three conditions, and placing beauty first (as, intellectually considered, it deserves to be), leave the useful, convenient, and comfortable pretty much to themselves, or, at least, consider them entitled only to a second place in their consideration. In the country places which they create the casual visitor may be struck with many beautiful effects; but when a trifling observation has shown him that this beauty is not the result of a harmony between the real and the ideal, — or, in other words, between the surface of things intended to be seen and the things themselves, as they minister to our daily wants, — then all the pleasure vanishes and the opposite feeling takes its place.

To begin at the very root of things, the most defective matter in laying out our country places (as we know from experience) is the want of forethought and plan regarding

\* Original date of March, 1850.

the location of what may be called the kitchen offices. By this, we refer, of course, to that wing or portion of a country house containing the kitchen, with its storeroom, pantry, scullery, laundry, wood-house, and whatever else, more or less, may be included under this head.\*

Our correspondent, Jeffreys, has, in his usual bold manner, pointed out how defective, in all cases (where the thing is not impossible), is a country house with a kitchen below stairs; and we have but lamely apologized for the practice in some houses by the greater economy of such an arrangement. But in truth we quite agree with him that no country house is complete unless the kitchen offices are on the same level as the principal floor containing the living apartments. ✓

At first thought our inexperienced readers may not see precisely what this has to do with laying out the grounds of a country place. But, indeed, it is the very starting point and fundamental substratum on which the whole thing rests. There can be no complete country place, however large or small, in which the greatest possible amount of privacy and seclusion is not attained within its grounds, especially within that part intended for the enjoyment of the family. Now it is very clear that there can be no seclusion where there is no separation of uses, no shelter, no portions set apart for especial purposes, both of utility and enjoyment. First of all, then, in planning a country place, the house should be so located that there shall be at least two sides; an entrance side, which belongs to the living, or best apartments of the house; and a kitchen side (or "blind side"), complete in itself, and more or less shut out from all observation from the remaining portions of the place.

This is as indispensable for the comfort of the inmates of the kitchen as those of the parlor. By shutting off completely one side of the house by belts or plantations of trees and shrubbery from the rest, you are enabled to make that part

\* In the office parlance of landscape architects of 1921 these are always grouped under the one term "service," and the endeavor is made to dispose them all in one "service area." — F. A. W.

more extensive and complete in itself. The kitchen yard, the clothes-drying ground, the dairy, and all the structures which are so practically important in a country house, have abundant room and space, and the domestics can perform their appointed labors with ease and freedom, without disturbing the different aspect of any other portion of the grounds. There are few new sites where there is not naturally a "blind side" indicated; a side where there is a fringe of wood, or some natural disposition of surface, which points it out as the spot where the kitchen offices should be placed, in order to have the utmost shelter and privacy, — at the same time leaving the finer glades, openings, and views for the more refined, social and beautiful portions of the residence. Wherever these indications are wanting they must be created by artificial planting of belts and groups of trees and shrubs, — not in stiff and formal lines like fences, but in an irregular and naturally varied manner, so as to appear as if formed of a natural copse, or rather so as not to attract special attention at all.

We are induced to insist upon this point the more strenuously because, along with the taste for the architecture of Pericles (may we indulge the hope that he is not permitted to behold the *Greek* architecture of the new world!) which came into fashion in this country fifteen or twenty years ago, came also the fashion of sweeping away everything that was not temple-like about the house. Far from recognizing that man lives a domestic life, — that he cooks, washes, bakes and churns in his country house, and, therefore, that kitchen offices (tastefully concealed if you please, but still ample) are a necessary, and therefore truthful part of his dwelling, — they went upon the principle that if man had fallen, and was no longer one of the gods, he might still live in a temple dedicated to the immortals. A clear space on all sides, pediments at each end, and perhaps a colonnade all round; this is the undomestic, uncomfortable ideal of half the better country houses in America.

Having fixed upon and arranged the blind side of the house — which, of course, will naturally be placed so as to

connect itself directly with the stable and other out-buildings, — the next point of attack is the kitchen garden. This is not so easily disposed of as many imagine. All persons of good taste agree that however necessary, satisfactory, and pleasant a thing a good kitchen garden is, it is not, æsthetically, considered a beautiful thing; and it never accords well with the ornamental portions of a country place, where the latter is large enough to have a lawn, pleasure grounds, or other portions that give it an ornamental character. The fruit trees (and we include now, for the sake of conciseness, kitchen and fruit garden), the vegetables, and all that makes the utility of the kitchen garden, never harmonize with the more graceful forms of ornamental scenery. Hence the kitchen garden in a complete country place should always form a scene by itself, and should also be shut out from the lawn or ornamental grounds by plantations of trees and shrubs. A good locality as regards soil is an important point to be considered in determining its site; and it will usually adjoin the space given to the kitchen offices, or that near the stable or barns, or perhaps lie between both so that it also is kept on the blind side of the house.

After having disposed of the useful and indispensable portions of the place, by placing them in the spots at once best fitted for them at least interfering with the convenience and beauty of the remaining portions, let us now turn to what may properly be called the ornamental portion of the place.

This may be confined to a mere bit of lawn, extending a few feet in front of the parlor windows, or it may cover a number of acres, according to the extent of the place and the taste and means of the owner.

Be that as it may, the groundwork of this part should, in our judgment, always be lawn. There is in the country no object, which at all seasons and times gives the constant satisfaction of the green turf of a nicely kept lawn. If your place is large, so much larger and broader is the good effect of the lawn, as it stretches away over gentle undulations,

alternately smiling and looking serious, in the play of sunshine and shade that rests upon it. If it is small — a mere bit of green turf before your door — then it forms the best and most becoming setting to the small beds and masses of ever-blooming roses, verbenas, and gay annuals with which you embroider it like a carpet.

Lawn there must be, to give any refreshment to the spirit of man in our country places; for nothing is so intolerable to the eye as great flower-gardens of parched earth, lying half-baked in the meridian sun of an American summer. And though no nation under the sun may have such lawns as the British, because Britain lies in the lap of the sea, with a climate always more or less humid, yet green and pleasant lawns most persons may have in the northern states, who will make the soil deep and keep the grass well mown.

To mow a large surface of lawn — that is to say, many acres — is a thing attempted in but few places in America, from the high price of labor. But a happy expedient comes in to our aid to save labor and trouble and produce all the good effect of a well-mown lawn. We mean sheep and wire fences. Our neighbor and correspondent, Mr. Sargent, of Wodenethe, on the Hudson, who passed a couple of years abroad curiously gleaning all clever foreign notions that were really worth naturalizing at home, has already told our readers how wire fences may be constructed round lawns or portions of the pleasure grounds so that only a strip round the house need be mown while the extent of the lawn is kept short by sheep. This fence, which costs less than any tolerable looking fence of other materials, is abundantly strong to turn both sheep and cattle and is invisible at the distance of 40 or 50 rods. Mr. Sargent is not a theorist, but has actually inclosed his own lawn of several acres in this way, and those who have examined the plan are struck with the usefulness and economy of the thing in all ornamental country places of considerable extent.

We have said nothing as yet of the most important feature of all country places — trees. A country place without

trees is like a caliph without his beard, in other words, it is not a country place. We shall assume, therefore, that all proprietors who do not already possess this indispensable feature will set about planting with more ardor than Walter Scott ever did. It is the one thing needful for them; and deep trenching, plentiful manuring, and sufficient mulching are the powerful auxiliaries to help them forward in the good work.

It is, of course, impossible for us to tell our readers how to arrange trees tastefully and well under all circumstances in this short chapter. We can offer them, however, two or three hints as to arrangement which they may perhaps profit by.

The first principle in ornamental planting is to study the character of the place to be improved and to plant in accordance with it. If your place has breadth and simplicity, and fine open views, plant in groups, and rather sparingly, so as to heighten and adorn the landscape, not shut out and obstruct the beauty of prospect which nature has placed before your eyes. Scattered groups, with continuous reaches or vistas between, produce the best effect in such situations. In other and more remote parts of the place greater density of foliage may serve as a contrast.

In residences where there is little or no distant view the contrary plan must be pursued. Intricacy and variety must be created by planting. Walks must be led in various directions and concealed from each other by thickets and masses of shrubs and trees and occasionally rich masses of foliage not forgetting to heighten all, however, by an occasional contrast of broad, unbroken surface of lawn.

In all country places, and especially in small ones, a great object to be kept in view in planting is to produce as perfect seclusion and privacy within the grounds as possible. We do not entirely feel that to be our own which is indiscriminately enjoyed by each passer-by and every man's individuality and home-feeling is invaded by the presence of unbidden guests. Therefore, while you preserve the beauty of the view, shut out, by boundary belts and thickets, all

eyes but those that are fairly within your own grounds. This will enable you to feel at home all over your place and to indulge your individual taste in walking, riding, reciting your next speech or sermon, or wearing any peculiarly rustic costume, without being suspected of being a "queer fellow" by any of your neighbors; while it will add to the general beauty and interest of the country at large, — since, in passing a fine place, we always imagine it finer than it is, if a boundary plantation, by concealing it, forces us to depend wholly on the imagination.



## CHAPTER XVII

### *THE MANAGEMENT OF LARGE COUNTRY PLACES \**

COUNTRY places that may properly be called ornamental † are increasing so fast, especially in the neighborhood of the large cities, that a word or two more touching their treatment will not be looked upon as out of place here.

All our country residences may readily be divided into two classes. The first and largest class is the suburban place of from five to twenty or thirty acres; the second is the country-seat, properly so called, which consists of from thirty to five hundred or more acres.

In all suburban residences, from the limited extent of ground, and the desire to get the utmost beauty from it, the whole, or at least a large part of the ornamental portion, must be considered only as pleasure grounds — a term used to denote a garden scene, consisting of trees, shrubs, and flowers, generally upon a basis of lawn, laid out in walks of different styles, and kept in the highest order. The aim in this kind of residence is to produce the greatest possible variety within a given space and to attain the utmost beauty of gardening as an art by the highest keeping and culture which the means of the proprietor will permit.

Of this kind of pleasure ground residence, we have numberless excellent examples, and perhaps nowhere more admirable specimens than in the neighborhood of Boston. Both

\* Original date of March, 1851.

† Attention has been called elsewhere in this volume to Mr. Downing's habitual use of this word "ornamental" — a word which has become unfashionable and distasteful to the present generation. It is well to remember that this word carried no unpleasant connotations in his day.  
— F. A. W.

in design and execution these little places will, at the present moment, bear very favorable comparison with many in older countries. The practical management of such places is also very well understood and they need no especial mention in these remarks.

But in the larger country places there are ten instances of failure for one of success. This is not owing to the want of natural beauty, for the sites are picturesque, the surface varied, and the woods and plantations excellent. The failure consists, for the most part, in a certain incongruity and want of distinct character in the treatment of the place as a whole. They are too large to be kept in order as pleasure grounds, while they are not laid out or treated as parks. The grass which stretches on all sides of the house is partly mown for lawn, and partly for hay; the lines of the farm and the ornamental portion of the grounds meet in a confused and unsatisfactory manner, and the result is a residence pretending to be much superior to a common farm and yet not rising to the dignity of a really tasteful country-seat.

It appears to us that a species of country place particularly adapted to this country, has not, as yet, been attempted, though it offers the largest possible satisfaction at the least cost.

We mean a place which is a combination of the park-like and pastoral landscape. A place in which the chief features should be fine forest trees, either natural or planted, and scattered over a surface of grass, kept short by the pasturage of fine cattle. A place, in short, where sylvan and pastoral beauty, added to large extent and great facility of management, would cost no more than a much smaller demesne where a large part is laid out, planted, and kept in an expensive though still unsatisfactory manner.

There are sites of this kind, already prettily wooded, which may be had in many desirable localities at much cheaper rates than the improved sites. On certain portions of the Hudson, for instance, we could purchase to-day finely wooded sites and open glades, in the midst of fine scenery



FIG. 35. NATURAL WOODLAND — JUNIPERS

— in fact what could, with very trifling expense be turned into a natural park — at \$60 per acre, while the improved sites will readily command \$200 or \$300 per acre.

Considerable familiarity with the country-seats on the Hudson, enables us to state that, for the most part, few persons keep up a fine country place, counting all the products of the farm land attached to it, without being more or less out of pocket at the end of the year. And yet there are very few of the large places that can be looked upon as examples of tolerable keeping.

The explanation of this lies in the high price of all kinds of labor, which costs us nearly double or treble what it does on the other side of the Atlantic, and the comparatively small profits of land managed in the expensive way common on almost all farms attached to our Atlantic country-seats. The remedy for this unsatisfactory condition of the large country places is, we think, a very simple one — that of turning a large part of their areas into park meadow, and feeding it, instead of mowing and cultivating it.\*

The great and distinguishing beauty of England, as every one knows, is its parks. And yet the English parks are only very large meadows, studded with oaks and elms — and grazed — *profitably grazed*, by deer, cattle, and sheep. We believe it is a commonly received idea in this country, with those who have not travelled abroad, that English parks are portions of highly-dressed scenery — at least that they are kept short by frequent mowing, etc. It is an entire mistake. The mown lawn with its polished garden scenery, is confined to the pleasure grounds proper — a spot of greater or less size, immediately surrounding the house, and wholly separated from the park by a terrace wall, or an iron fence, or some handsome architectural barrier. The park, which generally comes quite up to the house on one side, receives no other attention than such as belongs to

\* Although conditions have changed greatly for the better since Mr. Downing wrote these lines, the practice of pasturing park lands with cattle or sheep has not become popular. It seems quite possible that this practice might still be extended, and the recommendation of Mr. Downing to that effect may now be renewed. — F. A. W.

the care of the animals that graze in it. As most of these parks afford excellent pasturage, and though apparently one wide, unbroken surface, they are really subdivided into large fields, by wire or other invisible fences, they actually pay a very fair income to the proprietor, in the shape of good beef, mutton, and venison.

Certainly, nothing can be a more beautiful sight in its way, than the numerous herds of deer, short-horned cattle and fine sheep, which embroider and give life to the scenery of an English country home of this kind.\* There is a quiet pastoral beauty, a spaciousness and dignity, and a simple feeling of nature about it which no highly decorated pleasure grounds or garden scenery can approach, as the continual surrounding of a country residence. It is, in fact, the poetical idea of Arcadia, a sort of ideal nature, softened refined, and ennobled, without being made to look artificial.

Of course any thing like English parks, so far as regards extent, is almost out of the question here; simply because land and fortunes are widely divided here, instead of being kept in large bodies, intact, as in England. Still, as the first class country-seats of the Hudson now command from \$50,000 to \$75,000, it is evident that there is a growing taste for space and beauty in the private domains of republicans. What we wish to suggest now is simply that the greatest beauty and satisfaction may be had here, as in England (for the plan really suits our limited means better), by treating the bulk of the ornamental portion as open park pasture, and thus getting the greatest space and beauty at the least original expenditure and with the largest annual profit.

To some of our readers who have never seen the thing the idea of a park pastured by animals almost to the very door will seem at variance with all decorum and elegance. This, however, is not actually the case. The house should

\* All attempts to render our native deer really tame in home grounds have, so far as we know, failed among us, though with patience the thing may doubtless be done. It would be well worth while to import the finer breeds of the English deer, which are thoroughly domesticated in their habits, and the most beautiful animals for a park. — A. J. D.

either stand on a raised terrace of turf, which, if it is a fine mansion, may have a handsome terrace wall, or if a cottage, a pretty rustic or trellis fence, to separate it from the park. Directly around the house, and stretching on one or more sides, in the rear, lie the more highly dressed portions of the scene, which may be a flower-garden and shrubbery set in a small bit of lawn kept as short as velvet — or may be pleasure grounds, fruit, and kitchen-gardens, so multiplied as to equal the largest necessities of the place and family. All that is to be borne in mind is, that the park may be as large as you can afford to purchase — for it may be kept up at a profit — while the pleasure grounds and garden scenery, may, with this management, be compressed into the smallest space actually deemed necessary to the place, thereby lessening labor and bestowing that labor in a concentrated space, where it will tell.

The practical details of keeping the stock upon such a place, are familiar to almost every farmer. Of course in a country place only comely animals would be kept, and a preference would be given to breeds of fine stock that “take on flesh” readily, and command the best price in the market. In cases where an interest is taken in breeding cattle provision must be made in the shape of hay and shelter for the whole year round; but we imagine the most profitable, as well as least troublesome mode, to the majority of gentlemen proprietors would be to buy the suitable stock in the spring, put it in good condition, and sell it again in the autumn. The sheep would also require to be folded at night to prevent the flocks from being ravaged by dogs.

With this kind of arrangement and management of a country place the owner would be in a position to reap the greatest enjoyment with the least possible care. To country gentlemen ignorant of farming, such an extent of park, with its drives and walks, along with its simplicity of management, would be a relief from a multitude of embarrassing details; while to those who have tried, to their cost, the expenses of keeping a large place in high order, it would be an equal relief to the debtor side of the cash account.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *COUNTRY PLACES IN AUTUMN \**

**N**OVEMBER, which is one of the least interesting months to those who come into the country to admire the freshness of spring or the fulness of summer and early autumn, is one of the most interesting to those who live in the country or who have country places which they wish to improve.

When the leaves have all dropped from the trees, when the enchantment and illusion of summer are over, and "the fall" (our expressive American word for autumn) has stripped the glory from the sylvan landscape, then the rural improver puts on his spectacles, and looks at his demesne with practical and philosophical eyes. Taking things at their worst, as they appear now, he sets about finding out what improvements can be made and how the surroundings which make his home can be so arranged as to offer a fairer picture to the eye or a larger share of enjoyments and benefits to the family in the year that is to come.

The end of autumn is the best month to buy a country place, and the best to improve one. You see it then in the barest skeleton expression of ugliness or beauty, with all opportunity to learn its defects, all its weak points visible, all its possible capacities and suggestions for improvement laid bare to you. If it satisfy you now, either in its present aspect or in what promise you see in it of order and beauty after your moderate plans are carried out, you may buy it with the full assurance that you will not have cause to repent when you learn to like it better as seen in the fresher and fairer aspect of its summer loveliness.

As a season for rural improvements the fall is preferable

\* Original date of December, 1850.

to the spring, partly because the earth is dryer and more easily moved and worked, and partly because there is more time to do well what we undertake. In the middle states fine autumnal weather is often continued till the middle of December, and as long as the ground is open and mellow the planting of hardy trees may be done with the best chances of success. The surface may be smoothed, drains made, walks and roads laid out, and all the heavier operations on the surface of the earth — so requisite as a groundwork for lawns and pleasure grounds, kitchen or flower-gardens — may be carried on more cheaply and efficiently than amid the bustle and hurry of spring. And when sharp frosty nights fairly set in, then is the time to commence the grander operations of transplanting. Then is the time for moving large trees, elms, maples, etc., a few of which will give more effect to a new and bare site than thousands of the young things which are the despair of all improvers of little faith and ardent imaginations. With two or three "hands," a pair of horses or oxen, a "stone boat," or low sled, and some ropes or "tackle," the removal of trees twenty-five feet high, and six or eight inches in the diameter of the stem is a very simple and easy process. A little practice will enable a couple of men to do it most perfectly and efficiently; and if only free-growing trees, like elms, maples, lindens, or horse-chestnuts, are chosen, there is no more doubt of success than in planting a currant bush. Two or three points we may, however, repeat, for the benefit of the novice, viz., to prepare the soil thoroughly by digging a large hole, trenching it two-and-a-half feet deep, and filling it with rich soil; to take up the tree with a good mass of roots inclosed in a ball of frozen earth; \* and to reduce the ends of the limbs, evenly all over the top, in order to lessen

\* This is easily done by digging a trench all round, leaving a ball about four or five feet in diameter, undermining it well, and leaving it to freeze for one or two nights. Then turn the tree down, place the uplifted side of the ball upon the "stone boat;" right the trunk, and get the whole ball firmly upon the sled, and then the horses will drag it easily to its new position. — A. J. D.



the demand for sustenance, made on the roots the first summer after removal.

This is not only the season to plant very hardy trees, it is also the time to feed those which are already established and are living on too scanty an income. And how many trees are there upon lawns and in gardens — shade trees and fruit trees — that are literally so poor that they are starving to death! Perhaps they have once been luxuriant and thrifty and have borne the finest fruit and blossoms so that their owners have smiled and said pleasant words in their praise as they passed beneath their boughs. Then they had a good subsistence, the native strength of the soil passed into their limbs and made them stretch out and expand with all the vigor of a young Hercules. Now, alas, they are mossy and decrepit, the leaves small, the blossoms or fruit indifferent. And yet they are not old. Nay, they are quite in the prime of life. If they could speak to their master or mistress, they would say "First of all, give us something to eat. Here are we, tied hand and foot to one spot where we have been feeding this dozen or twenty years until we are actually reduced to our last morsel. What the gardener has occasionally given us in his scanty top-dressing of manure has been as a mere crust thrown out to a famished man. If you wish us to salute you next year with a glorious drapery of green leaves — the deepest, richest green, and start into new forms of luxuriant growth — *feed us*. Dig a trench around us, at the extremity of our roots, throw away all the old worn-out soil you find there, and replace it with some fresh soil from the lower corner of some rich meadow where it has lain fallow for years growing richer every day. Mingle this with some manure, some chopped sods; anything that can allay our thirst and satisfy our hunger for three or four years to come, and see what a new leaf — yes, what volumes of new leaves we will turn over for you next year. We are fruit trees, perhaps, and you wish us to bear fair and excellent fruit. Then you must also feed us. The soil is thin, and contains little that we can digest; or it is old, and 'sour' for the want of being

aired. Remove all the earth for several yards about us, baring some of our roots, and perhaps shortening a few. Trench the ground where our new roots will ramble next year twenty inches deep. Mingle the top and bottom soil, rejecting the worst parts of it, and making the void good — *very good* — by manure, ashes, and decaying leaves. Then you shall have bushels of fair and fine pears and apples where you now have pecks of spotted and deformed fruit.”

Such is the sermon which the “tongues in trees” preach to those who listen to them at this season of the year. We do not mean to poets or lovers of nature (for to them they have other and more romantic stories to tell), but to the earnest, practical, working owners of the soil, especially to those who grudge a little food and a little labor, in order that the trees may live contented, healthy, beautiful, and fruitful lives. We have written it down here in order that our readers when they walk round their gardens and grounds and think “the work of the season is all done” may not be wholly blind and deaf to the fact that the trees are as capable, in their way, of hunger and thirst as the cattle in the farmyards; and since, at the oftenest, they only need feeding once a year, now is the cheapest and the best time for doing it. The very frosts of winter creep into the soil, loosened by stirring at this season, and fertilize, while they crumble and decompose it. Walk about, then, and listen to the sermon which your hungry trees preach.\*

\* The use of commercial fertilizers has developed greatly in more recent years. The best modern practice with elderly fruit trees consists in cultivating the soil, giving a fair allowance of fertilizer or barnyard manure, pruning out dead or diseased wood and giving three or four timely sprayings each year. — F. A. W.

## CHAPTER XIX

### *THE NEGLECTED AMERICAN PLANTS \**

**I**T is an old and familiar saying that a prophet is not without honor except in his own country, and as we were making our way this spring through a dense forest in the State of New Jersey, we were tempted to apply this saying to things as well as people. How many grand and stately trees there are in our woodlands that are never heeded by the arboriculturist in planting his lawns and pleasure grounds; how many rich and beautiful shrubs that might embellish our walks and add variety to our shrubberies that are left to wave on the mountain crag or overhang the steep side of some forest valley; how many rare and curious flowers that bloom unseen amid the depths of silent woods or along the margin of wild water-courses! Yes, our hothouses are full of the heaths of New Holland and the Cape, our parterres are gay with the verbenas and fuchsias of South America, our pleasure grounds are studded with the trees of Europe and Northern Asia, while the rarest spectacle in an American country place is to see above three or four native trees, rarer still to find any but foreign shrubs, and rarest of all to find any of our native wild flowers.

Nothing strikes foreign horticulturists and amateurs so much, as this apathy and indifference of Americans to the beautiful sylvan and floral products of their own country. An enthusiastic collector in Belgium first made us keenly sensible of this condition of our countrymen, last summer, in describing the difficulty he had in procuring from any of his correspondents here American seeds or plants, even of well known and tolerably abundant species, by telling us that amateurs and nurserymen who annually import from him every new and rare exotic that the richest collections

\* Original date of May, 1851.

of Europe possessed, could scarcely be prevailed upon to make a search for native American plants, far more beautiful, which grow in the woods not ten miles from their



FIG. 36. NATIVE FLOWERING DOGWOOD

own doors. Some of them were wholly ignorant of such plants except so far as a familiarity with their names in the books may be called an acquaintance. Others knew them

but considered them "wild plants," and therefore too little deserving of attention to be worth the trouble of collecting even for curious foreigners. "And so," he continued, "in a country of azaleas, kalmias, rhododendrons, cypripediums, magnolias and nyssas, — the loveliest flowers, shrubs, and trees of temperate climates, — you never put them in your gardens, but send over the water every year for thousands of dollars worth of English larches and Dutch hyacinths. *Voilà le goût Republicain!*"

In truth, we felt that we quite deserved the sweeping sarcasm of our Belgian friend. We had always, indeed, excused ourselves for the well known neglect of the riches of our native flora by saying that what we can see any day in the woods is not the thing by which to make a garden distinguished, and that since all mankind have a passion for novelty, where, as in a fine foreign tree or shrub, both beauty and novelty are combined, so much the greater is the pleasure experienced. But, indeed, one has only to go to England, where "American plants" are the fashion (not undeservedly, too), to learn that he knows very little about the beauty of American plants. The difference between a grand oak or magnolia, or tulip-tree, grown with all its graceful and majestic development of head, in a park where it has nothing to interfere with its expansion but sky and air, and the same tree shut up in a forest, a quarter of a mile high, with only a tall gigantic mast of a stem, and a tuft of foliage at the top, is the difference between the best bred and highly cultivated man of the day, and the best buffalo hunter of the Rocky Mountains, with his sinewy body tattooed and tanned till you scarcely know what is the natural color of the skin. A person accustomed to the wild Indian only, might think he knew perfectly well what a man is, and so indeed he does, if you mean a red man. But the "civilizee" is not more different from the aboriginal man of the forest than the cultivated and perfect garden tree or shrub (granting always that it takes to civilization, which some trees, like Indians, do not), than a tree of the pleasure grounds differs from a tree of the woods.

Perhaps the finest revelation of this sort in England is the clumps and masses of our mountain laurel and our azaleas and rhododendrons, which embellish the English pleasure grounds. In some of the great country seats, whole acres of lawn, kept like velvet, are made the ground-work upon which these masses of the richest foliaged and the gayest flowering shrubs are embroidered. Each mass is planted in a round or oval bed of deep, rich sandy mould, in which it attains a luxuriance and perfection of form and foliage almost as new to an American as to a Sandwich Islander. The Germans make avenues of our tulip-trees, and in the South of France, one finds more planted magnolias in the gardens than there are, out of the woods, in all the United States. It is thus, by seeing them away from home where their merits are better appreciated and more highly developed, that one learns for the first time what our gardens have lost, by our having none of these "American plants" in them.

The subject is one which should be pursued to much greater length than we are able to follow it in the present article. Our woods and swamps are full of the most exquisite plants, some of which would greatly embellish even the smallest garden. But it is rather to one single feature in the pleasure grounds that we would at this moment direct the attention, and that is the introduction of two broad-leaved evergreen shrubs that are abundant in every part of the middle states, and that are, nevertheless, seldom to be seen in any of our gardens or nurseries from one end of the country to the other. The defect is the more to be deplored, because our ornamental plantations, so far as they are evergreen, consist almost entirely of pines and firs — all narrow-leaved evergreens — far inferior in richness of foliage to those we have mentioned.

The native holly grows from Long Island to Florida, and is quite abundant in the woods of New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia. It forms a shrub or small tree, varying from four to forty feet in height, clothed with foliage and berries of the same ornamental character as the European holly,

except that the leaf is a shade lighter in its green. The plant, too, is perfectly hardy, even in the climate of Boston, while the European holly is quite too tender for open air culture in the middle states, notwithstanding that peaches ripen here in orchards, and in England only on walls.

The American laurel, or *Kalmia*, is too well known in all parts of the country to need any description. And what new shrub, we would ask, is there, whether from the Himalayas or the Andes, whether hardy or tender, which surpasses the American laurel when in perfection as to the richness of its dark green foliage or the exquisite delicacy and beauty of its gay masses of flowers? If it came from the highlands of Chili and were recently introduced it would bring a guinea a plant, and no grumbling!

Granting all this, let our readers who wish to decorate their grounds with something new and beautiful undertake now, in this month of May (for these plants are best transplanted after they have commenced a new growth), to plant some laurels and hollies. If they would do this quite successfully they must not stick them here and there among other shrubs in the common border, but prepare a bed or clump in some cool, rather shaded aspect — a north slope is better than a southern one — where the subsoil is rather damp than dry. The soil should be sandy or gravelly, with a mixture of black earth well decomposed, or a cart-load or two of rotten leaves from an old wood, and it should be at least eighteen or twenty inches deep to retain the moisture in a long drought. A bed of these fine evergreens made in this way will be a feature in the grounds, which after it has been well established for a few years will convince you far better than any words of ours of the neglected beauty of our American plants.\*

\* It is interesting to recall that, subsequent to the time of Mr. Downing's writing, there developed in this country a much better appreciation of our native plants. Doubtless Mr. Downing's advocacy had much to do with bringing them into better favor. At the present time native species are widely used by the best gardeners and landscape architects. — F. A. W.

## CHAPTER XX

### *A WORD IN FAVOR OF EVERGREENS \**

“**W**HAT is the reason,” said an intelligent European horticulturist to us lately, “that the Americans employ so few evergreens in their ornamental plantations? Abroad they are the trees most sought after, most highly prized, and most valued in landscape gardening, and that, too, in countries where the winters are comparatively mild and short. Here in the northern United States, where this season is both long and severe, and where you have, in your forests, the finest evergreens, they are only sparingly introduced into lawns or pleasure grounds.”

Our friend is right. There is a lamentable poverty of evergreens in the grounds of many country places in this country. Our plantations are mostly deciduous; and while there are thousands of persons who plant, in this country, such trashy trees (chiefly fit for towns) as the ailanthus, there is not one planter in a hundred but contents himself with a few fir trees as the sole representatives of the grand and rich foliaged family of evergreens.

They forget that, as summer dies, evergreens form the richest background to the kaleidoscope coloring of the changing autumn leaves; that in winter, they rob the chilly frost-king of his sternest terrors; that in spring, they give a southern and verdant character to the landscape in the first sunny day when not even the earliest poplar or willow has burst its buds.

More than this, — to look at the useful as well as the picturesque, — they are the body guards, the grenadiers, the outworks and fortifications, which properly defend the house and grounds from the cold winds and the driving storms that sweep pitilessly over unprotected places in

\* Original date of May, 1848.



many parts of the country. Well grown belts of evergreens, pines and firs, which

——— “in conic forms arise,  
And with a pointed spear divide the skies,”

have, in their congregated strength, a power of shelter and protection that no inexperienced person can possibly understand. Many a place, almost uninhabitable from the rude blasts of wind that sweep over it, has been rendered comparatively calm and sheltered; many a garden, so exposed that the cultivation of tender trees and plants was almost impossible, has been rendered mild and genial in its climate by the growth of a close shelter, composed of masses and groups of evergreen trees.

Compared with England, — that country whose parks and pleasure grounds are almost wholly evergreen, because her climate is so wonderfully congenial to their culture that dozens of species grow with the greatest luxuriance there, which neither France, Germany, nor the northern United States will produce — we say, compared with England, the variety of evergreens which it is possible for us to cultivate is quite limited. Still, though the variety is less, the general effect that may be produced is the same; and there is no apology for our neglecting, at least, the treasures that lie at our very gates, and by our road-sides — the fine indigenous trees of our country. These are within every one's reach; and even these, if properly introduced, would give a perpetual richness and beauty to our ornamental grounds, of which they are at this time, with partial exceptions, almost destitute.

As we are addressing ourselves now chiefly to beginners or those who have hitherto neglected this branch of arboriculture, we may commence by mentioning at the outset four evergreen trees worthy of attention, indeed, of almost universal attention in our ornamental plantations. Those are the Hemlock, the White Pine, the Norway Spruce, and the Balsam Fir.

We place the hemlock first, as we consider it beyond all

question the most graceful and beautiful evergreen tree commonly grown in this country. In its wild haunts, by the side of some steep mountain, or on the dark wooded banks of some deep valley, it is most often a grand and picturesque tree; when, as in some parts of the northern states, it covers countless acres of wild forest land, it becomes gloomy and monotonous. Hence there are few of our readers, unfamiliar as they are with it but in these phases, who have the least idea of its striking beauty when grown alone in a smooth lawn, its branches extending freely on all sides and sweeping the ground, its loose spray and full feathery foliage floating freely in the air and its proportions full of the finest symmetry and harmony. For airy gracefulness, and the absence of that stiffness more or less prevalent in most evergreens, we must be allowed, therefore, to claim the first place for the hemlock, as a tree for the lawn or park.

Unfortunately the hemlock has the reputation of being a difficult tree to transplant; and though we have seen a thousand of them removed with scarcely the loss of half a dozen plants, yet we are bound to confess, that, with the ordinary rude handling of the common gardener it is often impatient of removal. The truth is all evergreens are far more tender in their roots than deciduous trees. They will not bear that exposure to the sun and air, even for a short period, which seems to have little effect upon most deciduous trees. Once fairly dried and shrivelled, their roots are slow to regain their former vital power, and the plant in consequence dies.

This point well understood and guarded against, the hemlock is by no means a difficult tree to remove from the nurseries.\* When taken from the woods, it is best done with a frozen ball of earth in the winter; or, if the soil is sufficiently tenacious, with a damp ball in the spring.

\* In the nurseries this, and other evergreens, over four feet, should be regularly root pruned; i.e., the longest roots shortened with a spade every year. Treated thus, there is no difficulty whatever in removing trees of ten or twelve feet high. — A. J. D.

Of all the well known pines, we give the preference to our native White Pine for ornamental purposes. The soft and agreeable hue of its pliant foliage, the excellent form of the tree, and its adaptation to a great variety of soils and sites, are all recommendations not easily overlooked.

Besides it bears transplanting particularly well, and is, on this account also, more generally seen than any other species in our ornamental plantations. But its especial merit as an ornamental tree is the perpetually fine, rich, lively green of its foliage. In the northern states many evergreens lose their bright color in mid-winter, owing to the severity of the cold; and though they regain it quickly in the first mild days of spring, yet this temporary dinginess, at the season when verdure is rarest and most prized is undeniably a great defect. Both the hemlock and the white pine are exceptions. Even in the greatest depression of the thermometer known to our neighbors on the "disputed boundary" line,\* we believe the verdure of these trees is the same fine unchanging green. Again, this thin summer growth is of such a soft and lively color, that they are (unlike some of the other pines, the red cedar, etc.) as pleasant to look upon, even in June, as any fresh and full foliated deciduous tree rejoicing in all its full breadth of new summer robes. We place the white pine, therefore, among the first in the regards of the ornamental planter.

Perhaps the most popular foreign evergreen in this country is the Norway spruce. In fact it is so useful and valuable a tree that it is destined to become much more popular still. So hardy that it is used as a nurse plant to break off the wind in exposed sites and shelter more tender trees in young plantations; so readily adapting itself to any site that it thrives upon all soils, from light sand or dry gravel, to deep moist loam or clay; so accommodating in its habits that it will grow under the shade of other trees or in the most exposed positions; there is no planter of new places or improver of old ones who will not find it necessary to call it in to his assistance. Then again the

\* Meaning the Canadian line.

variety of purposes for which this tree may be used is so indefinite. Certainly there are few trees more strikingly picturesque than a fine Norway spruce, 40 or 50 years old, towering up from a base of thick branches which droop and fall to the very lawn, and hang off in those depending curves which make it such a favorite with artists. Any one who wishes ocular demonstration of the truth of this, will do well to daguerreotype in his mind (for certainly, once seen, he can never forget them) the fine specimens on the lawn at the seat of Col. Perkins, near Boston; or two or three, still larger, and almost equally well developed, in the old Linnæan Garden of Mr. Winter, at Flushing, Long Island.

The Norway spruce, abroad, is thought to grow rapidly only on soils somewhat damp. But this is not the case in America. We saw lately a young plantation of them of 10 or 12 years growth in the ground of Capt. Forbes, of Milton Hill, near Boston, on very high and dry gravelly soil, many of which made leading shoots last season of three or four feet. Their growth may be greatly promoted, as indeed may that of all evergreens, by a liberal top-dressing of ashes, applied early every spring or autumn.\*

Little seems to be known in the United States, as yet, of the great value of the Norway spruce, for hedges. We have no doubt whatever that it will soon become the favorite plant for evergreen hedges, as the buckthorn and Osage orange are already for deciduous hedges in this country. So hardy as to grow everywhere, so strong, and bearing the shears so well, as to form an almost impenetrable wall of foliage, it is precisely adapted to thousands of situations in the northern half of the Union, where an unfailing shelter; screen, and barrier, are wanted at all seasons.

The balsam fir is a neat, dark green evergreen tree, perhaps more generally employed for small grounds and plantations than any other by our gardeners. In truth it is

\* Unfortunately the Norway spruce is short-lived. After reaching the age of 40 to 50 years it deteriorates rapidly. In the states of the middle west and south it can hardly be grown at all. — F. A. W.

better adapted to small gardens, yards, or narrow lawns, than for landscape gardening on a large scale, as its beauty is of a formal kind; and though the tree often grows to thirty or forty feet, its appearance is never more pleasing than when it is from ten to fifteen or twenty feet high. The dark green hue of its foliage, which is pretty constant at all seasons, and the comparative ease with which it is transplanted, will always commend it to the ornamental improver. But as a full grown tree, it is not to be compared for a moment, to any one of the three species of evergreens that we have already noticed; since it becomes stiff and formal as it grows old, instead of graceful or picturesque, like the hemlock, white pine, or Norway spruce. Its chief value is for shrubberies, small gardens, or courtyards, in a formal or regular style. The facility of obtaining it, added to the excellent color of its foliage, and the great hardiness of the plant, induce us to give it a place among the four evergreens worthy of the universal attention of our ornamental planters.

The Arbor Vitæ, so useful for hedges and screens, is, we find, so rapidly becoming popular among our planters that it needs little further commendation.

For a rapid growing, bold, and picturesque evergreen, the Austrian pine is well deserving of attention. We find it remarkably hardy, adapting itself to all soils (though said to grow naturally in Austria on the lightest sands). A specimen here grew nearly three feet last season; and its bold, stiff foliage, is sufficiently marked to arrest the attention among all other evergreens.\*

The Swiss stone pine (*Pinus cembra*) we find also perfectly hardy in this latitude. This tree produces an eatable kernel, and though of comparatively slow growth, is certainly one of the most interesting of the pine family. The Italian stone pine, and the pinaster, are also beautiful trees for the climate of Philadelphia. The grand and lofty pines of California, the largest and loftiest evergreen trees in the world,

\* The Austrian pine has proved to be one of the hardiest and most successful evergreens in the plains states. — F. A. W.

are not yet to be found, except as small specimens here and there in the gardens of curious collectors in the United States. But we hope, with our continually increasing intercourse with western America, fresh seeds will be procured by our nurserymen, and grown abundantly for sale. The great Californian silver fir (*Abies grandis*) grows 200 feet high, with cones 6 inches long, and fine silvery foliage; and the noble silver fir (*A. nobilis*) is scarcely less striking. "I spent three weeks," says Douglass, the botanical traveller, "in a forest composed of this tree, and, day by day, could not cease to admire it." Both these fine fir trees grow in northern California, where they cover vast tracts of land, and, along with other species of pine, form grand and majestic features in the landscape of that country. The English have been before us in introducing these natives of our western shores; for we find them, though at high prices, now offered for sale in most of the large nurseries in Great Britain.

The most beautiful evergreen tree in America, and, perhaps — when foliage, flowers, and perfume are considered, — in the world, is the *Magnolia grandiflora* of our southern States. There where it grows in the deep alluvial soil of some river valley to the height of 70 or 80 feet, clothed with its large, thick, deep green, glossy leaves, like those of a gigantic laurel, covered in the season of its bloom with large, pure white blossoms that perfume the whole woods about it with their delicious odor; certainly, it presents a spectacle of unrivalled sylvan beauty. Much to be deplored is it, that north of New York it will not bear the rigor of the winters, and that we are denied the pleasure of seeing it grow freely in the open air. At Philadelphia it is quite hardy; and in the Bartram Garden, at Landreth's, and in various private grounds near that city, there are fine specimens 20 or 30 feet high growing without protection and blooming every year.

Wherever the climate will permit the culture of this superb evergreen, the ornamental planter would be unpardonable, in our eyes, not to possess it in considerable abundance.

## CHAPTER XXI

### *HINTS ON FLOWER GARDENS \**

**W**E are once more unlocked from the chilling embraces of the Ice-King! **APRIL**, full of soft airs, balm-dropping showers, and fitful gleams of sunshine, brings life and animation to the millions of embryo leaves and blossoms, that, quietly folded up in the bud, have slept the mesmeric sleep of a northern winter — April, that first gives us of the northern states our proper spring flowers, which seem to succeed almost by magic to the barrenness of the month gone by. A few pale snowdrops, sun-bright crocuses, and timidly blushing mezereums, have already gladdened us, like the few faint bars of golden and ruddy light that usher in the full radiance of sunrise; but April scatters in her train as she goes out, the first richness and beauty that really belong to a temperate spring. Hyacinths, and daffodils, and violets, bespread her lap and fill the air with fragrance, and the husbandman beholds with joy his orchards gay with the thousand blossoms — beautiful harbingers of luscious and abundant crops.

All this resurrection of sweetness and beauty, inspires us with a desire to look into the flower garden, and to say a few words about it and the flowers themselves. We trust there are none of “our parish,” who, though they may not make flower gardens, can turn away with impatient or unsympathizing hearts from flowers themselves. If there are such, we must, at the very threshold of the matter, borrow a homily for them from that pure and eloquent preacher, Mary Howitt:

“God might have made the earth bring forth  
Enough for great and small,  
The oak tree and the cedar tree,  
Without a flower at all.

\* Original date of April, 1847.

"Our outward life requires them not —  
Then wherefore had they birth?  
To minister delight to man,  
To beautify the earth.

"To comfort man, to whisper hope  
Whene'er his faith is dim;  
For who so careth for the flowers,  
Will much more care for him!"

Now, there are many genuine lovers of flowers who have attempted to make flower gardens — in the simplicity of their hearts believing it to be the easiest thing in the world to arrange so many beautiful annuals and perennials into "a living knot of wonders" — who have quite failed in realizing all that they conceived of and fairly expected when they first set about it. It is easy enough to draw upon paper a pleasing plan of a flower garden, whether in the geometric, or the natural, or the "gardenesque" style, that shall satisfy the eye of the beholder. But it is far more difficult to plant and arrange a garden of this kind in such a way as to afford a constant succession of beauty, both in blossom and leaf. Indeed, among the hundreds of avowed flower-gardens which we have seen in different parts of the country, public and private, we cannot name half-a-dozen which are in any considerable degree satisfactory.

The two leading faults in all our flower gardens, are the want of proper selection in the plants themselves, and a faulty arrangement, by which as much surface of bare soil meets the eye as is clothed with verdure and blossoms.

Regarding the first effect, it seems to us that the entire beauty of a flower garden almost depends upon it. However elegant or striking may be the design of a garden, that design is made poor or valueless, when it is badly planted so as to conceal its merits, or filled with a selection of unsuitable plants, which, from their coarse or ragged habit of growth, or their remaining in bloom but a short time, give the whole a confused and meagre effect. A flower garden, deserving the name, should, if possible, be as rich as a piece



of embroidery, during the whole summer and autumn. In a botanical garden, or the collection of a curious amateur, one expects to see variety of species, plants of all known forms, at the expense of everything else. But in a flower-garden, properly so called, the whole object of which is to afford a continual display of beautiful colors and delicious odors, we conceive that everything should be rejected (or only most sparingly introduced), which does not combine almost perpetual blooming, with neat and agreeable habit of growth.

The passion for novelty and variety among the lovers of flowers, is as great as in any other enthusiasts. But as some of the greatest of the old painters are said to owe the success of their masterpieces to the few colors they employed, so we are confident the most beautiful flower gardens are those where but few species are introduced, and those only such as possess the important qualities we have alluded to.

Thus among flowering shrubs, taking for illustration the tribe of Roses, we would reject, in our choice flower garden, nearly all the old class of roses, which are in bloom for a few days and but once a year, and exhibit during the rest of the season, for the most part, meagre stems and dingy foliage. We would supply their place by Bourbons, Perpetuals, Bengals, etc., roses which offer an abundance of blossoms and fine fresh foliage during the whole growing season. Among annuals, we would reject everything short-lived, and introduce only those like the portulaccas, verbenas, petunias, mignonette, Phlox drummondii, and the like, which are always in bloom, and fresh and pretty in habit.\*

After this we would add to the effect of our selection of perpetual blooming plants, by abandoning altogether the

\* Some of the most beautiful of the perpetual blooming plants for the flower-garden, are the salvias, bouvardias, scarlet geraniums, etc., properly green-house plants, and requiring protection in a pit or warm cellar in winter. Bedded out in May, they form rich flowering masses till the frosts of autumn. — A. J. D.

old method of intermingling species and varieties of all colors and habits of growth, and substitute for it the opposite mode of grouping or massing colors and particular species of plants. Masses of crimson and white, of yellow and purple, and the other colors and shades, brought boldly into contrast, or disposed so as to form an agreeable harmony, will attract the eye, and make a much more forcible



FIG. 37. FLOWER BED — PHLOX AND KOCHIA

and delightful impression, than can ever be produced by a confused mixture of shades and colors, nowhere distinct enough to give any decided effect to the whole. The effect of thus collecting masses of colors in a flower garden in this way, is to give it what the painters call breadth of effect, which in the other mode is entirely frittered away and destroyed.\*

\* It is hard to believe now how far in advance of the times was Downing's doctrine of mass effects, here clearly enunciated, — so far in advance of the times, indeed, that Downing himself did not always rise to it. — F. A. W.

This arranging plants in patches or masses, each composed of the same species, also contributes to do away in a great degree with the second fault which we have alluded to as a grievous one in most of our flower gardens — that of the exhibition of bare surface of soil — parts of beds not covered by foliage and flowers.

In a hot climate, like that of our summers, nothing is more displeasing to the eyes or more destructive to that expression of softness, verdure, and gayety, that should exist in the flower garden, than to behold the surface of the soil in any of the beds or parterres unclothed with plants. The dryness and parched appearance of such portions goes far to impair whatever air of freshness and beauty may be imparted by the flowers themselves. Now whenever beds are planted with a heterogeneous mixture of plants, tall and short, spreading and straggling, it is nearly impossible that considerable parts of the surface of the soil should not be visible. On the contrary, where species and varieties of plants, chosen for their excellent habits of growth and flowering, are planted in masses, almost every part of the surface of the beds may be hidden from the eye, which we consider almost a *sine qua non* in all good flower gardens.

Following out this principle — on the whole perhaps the most important in all flower gardens in this country — that there should, if possible, be no bare surface soil visible, our own taste leads us to prefer the modern English style of laying out flower gardens upon a groundwork of grass or turf, kept scrupulously short. Its advantage over a flower garden composed only of beds with a narrow edging and gravel walks, consists in the greater softness, freshness and verdure of the green turf, which serves as a setting to the flower beds, and heightens the brilliancy of the flowers themselves. Still, both these modes have their merits, and each is best adapted to certain situations, and harmonizes best with its appropriate scenery.

There are two other defects in many of our flower gardens, easily remedied, and about which we must say a word or two in passing.

One of these is the common practice, brought over here by gardeners from England, of forming raised convex beds for flowering plants. This is a very unmeaning and injurious practice in this country, as a moment's reference to the philosophy of the thing will convince any one. In a damp climate, like that of England, a bed with a high convex surface, by throwing off the superfluous water, keeps the plants from suffering by excess of wet, and the form is an excellent one. In this country, where most frequently our flower gardens fail from drouth, what sound reason can be given for forming the beds with a raised and rounded surface of six inches in every three feet, so as to throw off four-fifths of every shower? The true mode, as a little reflection and experience will convince any one, is to form the surface of the bed nearly level, so that it may retain its due proportion of the rains that fall.

Next to this is the defect of not keeping the walks in flower gardens full of gravel. In many instances that we could name, the level of the gravel in the walk is six inches below that of the adjoining bed or border of turf. This gives a harsh and ditch-like character to the walks, quite at variance with the smoothness and perfection of details which ought especially to characterize so elegant a portion of the grounds as this in question. "Keep the walks brimful of gravel," was one of the maxims most strongly insisted on by the late Mr. Loudon, and one to which we fully subscribe.\*

\* Originally this essay closed with a description, somewhat detailed, of a flower garden belonging to Baron von Hügel near Vienna, drawn from a German magazine, which description has been dropped from the present edition as having no practical interest at this time. — F. A. W.

## CHAPTER XXII

### *A CHAPTER ON ROSES \**

**A** FRESH bouquet of midsummer roses stands upon the table before us. The morning dew-drops hang heavy as emeralds, upon branch and buds; soft and rich colors delight the eye with their lovely hues, and that rose-odor, which, every one feels, has not lost anything of its divine sweetness since the first day the flower bloomed in that heaven-garden of Eve, fills the air. Yes, the flowers have it; and if we are not fairly forced to say something this month in behalf of roses, then was Dr. Darwin mistaken in his theory of vegetable magnetism.

We believe it was that monster, the Duke of Guise, who always made his escape at the sight of a rose. If there are any "outside barbarians" of this stamp among the readers of our "flowery land," let them glide out while the door is open. They deserve to be drowned in a butt of attar of roses — the insensibles! We can well afford to let them go, indeed; for we feel that we have only to mention the name of a rose, to draw more closely around us the thousands of the fairer and better part of our readers, with whom it is the type of everything fair and lovely on earth.

"Dear flower of heaven and love! thou glorious thing  
That lookest out the garden nooks among;  
Rose, that art ever fair and ever young;  
Was it some angel on invisible wing  
Hover'd around thy fragrant sleep, to fling  
His glowing mantle of warm sunset hues  
O'er thy unfolding petals, wet with dews,  
Such as the flower-fays to Titania bring?  
O flower of thousand memories and dreams,  
That take the heart with faintness, while we gaze

\* Original date of August, 1848.

On the rich depths of thy inwoven maze;  
From the green banks of Eden's blessed streams  
I dream'd thee brought, of brighter days to tell  
Long pass'd, but promised yet with us to dwell."

If there is any proof necessary that the rose has a diviner origin than all other flowers, it is easily found in the unvarying constancy of mankind to it for so many long centuries.



FIG. 38. PUBLIC ROSE GARDEN, MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

Fashions there have been innumerable, in ornaments of all sorts, from simple sea-shells, worn by Nubian maidens, to costly diamonds, that heightened the charms of the proudest court beauty — silver, gold, precious stones — all have their season of favor, and then again sink into comparative neglect; but a simple rose has ever been and will ever be the favorite emblem and adornment of beauty.

"Whatsoe'er of beauty  
Yearns, and yet reposes,  
Blush, and bosom, and sweet breath,  
Took a shape in roses." — LEIGH HUNT.

Now the secret of this perpetual and undying charm about the rose, is not to be found in its color — there are bright lilies, and gay tiger-flowers, and dazzling air-plants, far more rich and vivid: it is not alone in fragrance, — for there are violets and jasmines with "more passionate sighs of sweetness;" it is not in foliage, for there are laurels and magnolias, with leaves of richer and more glossy green. Where, then, does this secret of the world's six thousand years' homage lie?

In its being a type of *infinity*. Of infinity! says our most innocent maiden reader, who loves roses without caring why, and who does not love infinity, because she does not understand it. Roses, a type of infinity, says our theological reader, who has been in the habit of considering all flowers of the field, aye, and the garden, too, as emblems of the short-lived race of man — "born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." Yes, we have said it, and for the honor of the rose we will prove it, that the secret of the world's devotion to the rose, — of her being the queen of flowers by acclamation always and forever, is that the rose is a type of infinity.

In the first place, then, the rose is a type of infinity, because there is no limit to the variety and beauty of the forms and colors which it assumes. From the wild rose, whose sweet, faint odor is wasted in the depths of the silent wood, or the eglantine, whose wreaths of fresh sweet blossoms embroider even the dusty road sides,

"Starring each bush in lanes and glades,"

to that most perfect, full, rounded, and odorous flower, that swells the heart of the florist as he beholds its richness and symmetry, what an innumerable range of shades, and forms, and colors! And, indeed, with the hundreds and thousands of roses of modern times, we still know little of all the varied

shapes which the plant has taken in by-gone days, and which have perished with the thousand other refinements and luxuries of the nations who cultivated and enjoyed them.\*

All this variety of form, so far from destroying the admiration of mankind for the rose, actually increases it. This very character of infinity, in its beauty, makes it the symbol and interpreter of the affections of all ranks, classes, and conditions of men. The poet, amid all the perfections of the parterre, still prefers the scent of the woods and the air of freedom about the original blossom, and says —

“Far dearer to me is the wild flower that grows  
Unseen by the brook where in shadow it flows.”

The cabbage-rose, that perfect emblem of healthful rural life, is the pride of the cottager; the China rose, which cheats the window of the crowded city of its gloom, is the joy of the daughter of the humblest day laborer; the delicate and odorous tea rose, fated to be admired and to languish in the drawing-room or the boudoir, wins its place in the affections of those of most cultivated and fastidious tastes; while the moss rose unites the admiration of all classes, com-

\* Many of our readers may not be aware to what perfection the culture of flowers was once carried in Rome. During Cæsar's reign, so abundant had forced flowers become in that city, that when the Egyptians, intending to compliment him on his birthday, sent him roses in midwinter, they found their present almost valueless from the profusion of roses in Rome. The following translation of Martial's Latin Ode to Cæsar upon this present, will give some idea of the state of floriculture then. There can scarcely be a doubt that there were hundreds of sorts of roses known to, and cultivated by the Romans, now entirely lost.

“The ambitious inhabitants of the land, watered by the Nile, have sent thee, O Cæsar, the roses of winter, as a present, valuable for its novelty. But the boatman of Memphis will laugh at the gardens of Pharaoh as soon as he has taken one step in thy capital city; for the spring in all its charms, and the flowers in their fragrance and beauty, equal the glory of the fields of Pæstum. Wherever he wanders, or casts his eyes, every street is brilliant with garlands of roses. And thou, O Nile! must yield to the fogs of Rome. Send us thy harvests, and we will send thee roses.” — A. J. D.



ing in as it does with its last added charm, to complete the circle of perfection.

Again, there is the infinity of associations which float like rich incense about the rose, and that, after all, bind it most strongly to us; for they represent the accumulated wealth of joys and sorrows, which has become so inseparably connected with it in the human heart.

“What were life without a rose!”

seems to many, doubtless, to be a most extravagant apostrophe; yet, if this single flower were to be struck out of existence, what a chasm in the language of the heart would be found without it! What would the poets do? They would find their finest emblem of female loveliness stolen away. Listen, for instance, to old Beaumont and Fletcher:

————— “Of all flowers,  
Methinks a Rose is best;  
It is the very emblem of a maid;  
For when the west wind courts her gently,  
How modestly she blows and paints the sun  
With her chaste blushes! When the north wind comes near her,  
Rude and impatient, then, like chastity,  
She locks her beauties in her bud again,  
And leaves him to base briars.”

What would the lovers do? What tender confessions, hitherto uttered by fair half-open buds and bouquets, more eloquent of passion than the *Nouvelle Heloise*, would have to be stammered forth in miserable clumsy words! How many doubtful suits would be lost — how many bashful hearts would never venture — how many rash and reckless adventurers would be shipwrecked, if the tender and expressive language of the rose were all suddenly lost and blotted out! What could we place in the hands of childhood to mirror back its innocent expression so truly? What blossoms could bloom on the breast of the youthful beauty so typical of the infinity of hope and sweet thoughts, that lie folded up in her own heart, as fair young rose-buds? What wreath could so lovingly encircle the head of the fair young bride as that

of white roses, full of purity and grace? And, last of all, what blossom, so expressive of human affections, could we find at the bier to take the place of the rose; the rose, sacred to this purpose for so many ages, and with so many nations,

——— “because its breath  
Is rich beyond the rest; and when it dies  
It doth bequeath a charm to sweeten death.”

BARRY CORNWALL.

The rose is not only infinite in its forms, hues, types, and associations, but it deserves an infinite number of admirers. This is the explanation of our desire to be eloquent in its behalf. There are, unfortunately, some persons who, however lovely, beautiful, or perfect a thing may be in itself, will never raise their eyes to look at it, or open their hearts to admire it, unless it is incessantly talked about.

We have always observed, however, that the great difficulty with those who like to talk about fruits and flowers is, when once talking, to stop. There is no doubt whatever, that we might go on, therefore, and fill this whole number with roses, rosariums, rosaries, and rose-water, but that some of our western readers, who are looking for us to give them a cure for the pear-blight, might cry out — “a blight on your roses!” We must, therefore, grow more systematic and considerate in our remarks.

We thought some years ago that we had seen that *ultima thule* — “a perfect rose.” But we were mistaken! Old associates, familiar names, and long cherished sorts have their proper hold on our affections; but — we are bound to confess it — modern florists have coaxed and teased nature till she has given them roses more perfect in form, more airy, rich and brilliant in color, and more delicate and exquisite in perfume, than any that our grandfathers knew or dreamed of. And, more than all, they have produced roses — in abundance, as large and fragrant as June roses — that blossom all the year round. If this unceasingly renewed perpetuity of charms does not complete the claims

of the rose to infinity, as far as any plant can express that quality, then are we no metaphysician.

There is certainly something instinctive and true in that favorite fancy of the poets — that roses are the type or symbol of female loveliness —

“Know you not our only  
Rival flower — the human?  
Loveliest weight, on lightest foot —  
Joy-abundant woman,”

sings Leigh Hunt for the roses. And, we will add, it is striking and curious that refined and careful culture has the same effect on the outward conformation of the rose that it has on feminine beauty. The tea and the Bourbon roses may be taken as an illustration of this. They are the last and finest product of the most perfect culture of the garden; and do they not, in their graceful airy forms, their subdued and bewitching odors, and their refined and delicate colors, body forth the most perfect symbol of the most refined and cultivated Imogen or Ophelia that it is possible to conceive? We claim the entire merit of pointing this out, and leave it for some poet to make himself immortal by!

There are odd, crotchety persons among horticulturists, who correspond to old bachelors in society, that are never satisfied to love any thing in particular, because they have really no affections of their own to fix upon any object, and who are always, for instance, excusing their want of devotion to the rose, under the pretence that among so many beautiful varieties it is impossible to choose.

Undoubtedly there is an *embarras de richesses* in the multitude of beautiful varieties that compose the groups and subdivisions of the rose family. So many lovely forms and colors are there, dazzling the eye, and attracting the senses, that it requires a man or woman of nerve as well as taste, to decide and select. Some of the great rose-growers continually try to confuse the poor amateur by their long catalogues, and by their advertisements about “acres of roses.” (Mr. Paul, an English nurseryman, published, in June last,

that he had 70,000 plants in bloom at once!) This is puzzling enough, even to one that has his eyes wide open, and the sorts in full blaze of beauty before them. What, then, must be the quandary in which the novice, not yet introduced into the aristocracy of roses, whose knowledge only goes up to a "cabbage-rose," or a "maiden's blush," and who has in his hand a long list of some great collector — what, we say, must be his perplexity, when he suddenly finds amidst all the renowned names of old and new world's history, all the aristocrats and republicans, heroes and heroines of past and present times — Napoleon, Prince Esterhazy, Tippoo Saib, Semiramis, Duchess of Sutherland, Princesse Clementine, with occasionally such touches of sentiment from the French rose-growers, as *Souvenir d'un Ami*, or *Nid d'Amour* (nest of love!) etc., etc. In this whirlpool of rank, fashion, and sentiment, the poor novitiate rose-hunter is likely enough to be quite wrecked; and instead of looking out for a perfect rose, it is a thousand to one that he finds himself confused amid the names of princes, princesses, and lovely duchesses, a vivid picture of whose charms rises to his imagination as he reads the brief words "pale flesh, wax-like, superb," or "large, perfect form, beautiful," or "pale blush, very pretty;" so that it is ten to one that Duchesses, not Roses, are all the while at the bottom of his imagination!

Now, the only way to help the rose novices out of this difficulty, is for all the initiated to confess their favorites. No doubt it will be a hard task for those who have had butterfly fancies, — coquetting first with one family and then with another. But we trust these horticultural flirts are rare among the more experienced of our gardening readers, — persons of sense, who have laid aside such follies, as only becoming to youthful and inexperienced amateurs.

We have long ago invited our correspondents to send us their "confessions," which, if not as mysterious and fascinating as those of Rousseau, would be found far more innocent and wholesome to our readers. Mr. Buist (whose new nursery grounds, near Philadelphia, have, we learn,

been a paradise of roses this season), has already sent us his list of favorites, which we have before made public, to the great satisfaction of many about to form little rose-gardens. Dr. Valk, also, has indicated his preferences. And to encourage other devotees — more experienced than ourselves — we give our own list of favorites, as follows:

First of all roses, then, in our estimation, stands the Bourbons (the only branch of the family, not repudiated by republicans). The most perpetual of all perpetuals, the most lovely in form, of all colors, and many of them of the richest fragrance; and, for us northerners, most of all, hardy and easily cultivated, we cannot but give them the first rank. Let us, then, say —

HALF A DOZEN BOURBON ROSES \*

Souvenir de Malmaison, *pale flesh color*.

Paul Joseph, *purplish crimson*.

Hermosa, *deep rose*.

Queen, *delicate fawn color*.

Dupetit Thouars, *changeable carmine*.

Acidalie, *white*.

Souvenir de Malmaison is, take it altogether, — its constant blooming habit, its large size, hardiness, beautiful form, exquisite color, and charming fragrance, — our favorite rose; the rose which, if we should be condemned to that hard penance of cultivating but one variety, our choice would immediately settle upon. Its beauty suggests a blending of the finest sculpture and the loveliest feminine complexion.

Second to the Bourbons, we rank the Remontantes, as the French term them; a better name than the English one — perpetuals; for they are by no means perpetual in their blooming habit, when compared with the Bourbons, China,

\* It has seemed best to keep this chapter intact as first written by Mr. Downing. So many new roses have been introduced since his day, however, that his recommendations of particular varieties cannot be expected to cover the field at this time. In an appendix there has been given therefore a modern list of the best varieties now available in American nurseries. — F. A. W.

or tea roses. They are, in fact, June roses, that bloom two or three times in the season, whenever strong new shoots spring up; hence, no name so appropriate as Remontante, — sending up new flower shoots. We think this class of roses has been a little overrated by rose-growers. Its great merit is the true, old-fashioned rose character of the blossoms, — large and fragrant as a damask or Provence rose. But in this climate, Remontantes cannot be depended on for a constant supply of flowers, like Bourbon roses. Here are our favorites:

HALF A DOZEN REMONTANTES

La Reine, *deep rose, very large.*  
 Duchess of Sutherland, *pale rose.*  
 Crimson Perpetual, *light crimson.*  
 Aubernon, *brilliant crimson.*  
 Lady Alice Peel, *fine deep pink.*  
 Madam Dameme, *dark crimson.*

Next to these come the China roses, less fragrant, but everlastingly in bloom, and with very bright and rich colors.

HALF A DOZEN CHINA ROSES

Mrs. Bosanquet, *exquisite pale flesh color.*  
 Madame Breon, *rose.*  
 Eugene Beauharnais, *bright crimson.*  
 Clara Sylvain, *pure white.*  
 Cramoisie Superieure, *brilliant crimson.*  
 Virginale, *blush.*

The tea roses, most refined of all roses, unluckily, require considerable shelter and care in winter, in this climate; but they so richly repay all, that no rose-lover can grudge them this trouble. Tea roses are, indeed, to the common garden varieties what the finest porcelain is to vulgar crockery ware.

HALF A DOZEN TEA ROSES

Safrano, *the buds rich deep fawn.*  
 Souvenir d'un Ami, *salmon, shaded with rose.*  
 Goubault, *bright rose, large and fragrant.*  
 Devoniensis, *creamy white.*  
 Bougere, *glossy bronze.*  
 Josephine Malton, *beautiful shaded white.*

We thought to give noisettes the go-by; but the saucy, rampant little beauties climb up and thrust their clusters of bright blossoms into our face, and will be heard. So here they are:

## HALF A DOZEN NOISETTES

Solfaterre, *bright sulphur, large.*

Jaune Desprez, *large bright fawn.*

Cloth of Gold, *pure yellow, fine.*

Aimee Vibert, *pure white, very free bloomer.*

Fellenberg, *brilliant crimson*

Joan of Arc, *pure white.*

“Girdle of Venus! does he call this a select list?” exclaims some leveller, who expected us to compress all rose perfections into half a dozen sorts; when here we find, on looking back, that we have thirty, and even then, there is not a single moss rose, climbing rose, Provence rose, damask rose, to say nothing of “musk roses,” “microphylla roses,” and half a dozen other divisions that we boldly shut our eyes upon! Well, if the truth must come out, we confess it boldly, that we are worshippers of the everblooming roses. Compared with them, beautiful as all other roses may be and are (we can’t deny it), they have little chance of favor with those that we have named, which are a perpetual garland of sweetness. It is the difference between a smile once a year, and a golden temper, always sweetness and sunshine. Why, the everblooming roses make a garden of themselves! Not a day without rich colors, delicious perfume, luxuriant foliage. No, take the lists as they are — too small by half; for we cannot cut a name out of them.

And yet, there are a few other roses that ought to be in the smallest collection. That finest of all rose-gems, the Old Red Moss, still at the head of all moss roses, and its curious cousin, the Crested Moss, must have their place. Those fine hardy climbers, that in northern gardens will grow in any exposure, and cover the highest walls or trellises with garlands of beauty, — the Queen of the Prairies and Baltimore Belle (or, for southern gardens, say — Laure Davoust, and Greville, and Ruga Ayrshire); that finest and richest

of all yellow roses, the double Persian Yellow, and half a dozen of the gems among the hybrid roses, such as Chénédole, George the Fourth, Village Maid, Great Western, Fulgeus, Blanchefleur; we should try, at least, to make room for these also.

If we were to have but three roses, for our own personal gratification, they would be —

Souvenir de Malmaison,  
Old Red Moss,  
Gen. Dubourg.

The latter is a Bourbon rose, which, because it is an old variety, and not very double, has gone out of fashion. We, however, shall cultivate it as long as we enjoy the blessing of olfactory nerves; for it gives us, all the season, an abundance of flowers, with the most perfect rose scent that we have ever yet found; in fact, the true attar of Rose.

There are few secrets in the cultivation of the rose in this climate. First of all, make the soil deep; and, if the sub-soil is not quite dry, let it be well drained. Then remember, that what the rose delights to grow in is loam and rotten manure. Enrich your soil, therefore, with well-decomposed stable manure; and if it is too sandy, mix fresh loam from an old pasture field; if it is too clayey, mix river or pit sand with it. The most perfect specific stimulus that we have ever tried in the culture of the rose, is what Mr. Rivers calls roasted turf, which is easily made by paring sods from the lane sides, and half charring them. It acts like magic upon the little spongioles of the rose; making new buds and fine fresh foliage start out very speedily, and then a succession of superb and richly colored flowers. We recommend it, especially, to all those who cultivate roses in old gardens, where the soil is more or less worn out.

And now, like the Persians, with the hope that our fair readers "may sleep upon roses, and the dew that falls may turn into rose-water," we must end this rather prolix chapter upon roses.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### A TALK WITH FLORA AND POMONA \*

WE beg leave to inform such of our readers as may be interested, that we have lately had the honor of a personal interview with the distinguished deities that preside over the garden and the orchard, Flora and Pomona.

The time was a soft balmy August night; the scene was a leafy nook in our own grounds, where, after the toils of the day, we were enjoying the *dolce far niente* of a hammock, and wondering at the necessity of any thing fairer or diviner than rural nature, and such moonlight as then filled the vaulted heaven, bathed the tufted foreground of trees, the distant purple hills, and

“Tipt with silver all the fruit tree tops.”

It was a scene for an artist; yet, as we do not write for the Court Journal, we must be pardoned for any little omission in the costumes or equipages of the divinities themselves. Indeed, we were so thoroughly captivated with the immortal candor and freshness of the goddesses, that we find many of the accessories have escaped our memory. Pomona's breath, however, when she spoke, filled the air with the odor of ripe apricots, and she held in her left hand a fruit, which we immediately recognized as one of the golden apples of the Hesperides, (of which she knew any gardener upon earth would give his right hand for a slip), and which in the course of our interview, she acknowledged was the

\* Original date of September, 1847. It is hoped that the reader of to-day is not so thoroughly steeped in the Mutt and Jeff humor of the colored Sunday supplement as to miss the pleasant and restrained chaffing of this essay. The pécadillos here satirized have not altogether disappeared from the horticultural world. — F. A. W.

only sort in the mythological gardens which excels the Newtown Pippin. Her lips had the dewy freshness of the ruddiest strawberries raised by Mr. Longworth's\* favorite old Cincinnati market woman; and there was a bright sparkle in her eye, that assured us there is no trouble with the curculio in the celestial orchards.

But if we were charmed with the ruddy beauty of Pomona, we were still more fascinated by the ideal freshness and grace of Flora. She wore on her head a kind of fanciful crown of roses, which were not only dewy moss roses, of the loveliest shades imaginable, but the colors themselves changed every moment, as she turned her head, in a manner that struck us quite speechless with admiration. The goddess observing this, very graciously remarked that these roses were the true perpetuals, since they not only really bloomed always, but when plucked, they retained their brilliancy and freshness for ever. Her girdle was woven in a kind of green and silver pattern of jasmine leaves and starry blossoms, but of a species far more lovely than any in Mr. Paxton's Magazine. She held a bouquet in her hand, composed of sweet scented camellias, and violets as dark as sapphire, which she said her gardener had brought from the new planet Neptune; and unique and fragrant blossoms continually dropped from her robe, as she walked about, or raised her arms in gestures graceful as the swinging of a garland wooed by the west wind.

After some stammering on our own part, about the honor conferred on an humble mortal like ourselves — rare visits of the goddesses to earth, etc., they, understanding, probably, what Mr. Beecher † calls our “amiable fondness for the Hudson,” obligingly put us at our ease, by paying us some compliments on the scenery of the Highlands, as seen at that moment from our garden seat, comparing the broad river, radiant with the chaste light of the moon, to some

\* Referring to Nicholas Longworth of Cincinnati, famous horticulturist and grape grower, who still has a grandson in Congress.

† Referring to the famous Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, at that time editing a horticultural column in Indiana.

favorite lake owned by the immortals, of whose name, we are sorry to say, we are at this moment entirely oblivious.

Our readers will not, of course, expect us to repeat all that passed during this enchanting interview. But, as we are obliged to own that the visit was not altogether on our own behalf, or rather that the turn of the discourse held by our immortal guests showed that it was chiefly intended to be laid before the readers of the *Horticulturist*, we lose no time in putting the latter *en rapport*.

Pomona opened the discourse by a few graceful remarks, touching the gratification it gave them that the moderns, down to the present generation, had piously recognized her guardian rights and those of her sister Flora, even while those of many of the other Olympians, such as Jupiter, Pan, Vulcan, and the like, were nearly forgotten. The wonderful fondness for fruits and flowers, growing up in the western world, had, she declared, not escaped her eye, and it received her warmest approbation. She said something that we do not quite remember, in the style of that good old phrase, of "making the wilderness blossom like the rose," and declared that Flora intended to festoon every cottage in America with double Michigan roses, Wistarias, and sweet-scented vines. For her own part, she said, her people were busy enough in their invisible superintendence of the orchard planting now going on at such a gigantic rate in America, especially in the Western States. Such was the fever in some of those districts, to get large plantations of fruit, that she could not, for the life of her, induce men to pause long enough to select their ground or the proper sorts of fruit to be planted. As a last resort, to keep them a little in check, she was obliged, against her better feelings, to allow the blight to cut off part of an orchard now and then.\* Otherwise the whole country would be filled up with poor miserable odds and ends from Europe — "Beurrés and Bergamots, with more sound in their French names, than flavor under their skins."

\* At this time the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher was writing his elaborate (and unfortunately forgotten) thesis on the pear blight. — F. A. W.

These last words, we confess, startled us so much, that we opened our eyes rather widely, and called upon the name of Dr. Van Mons, the great Belgian — spoke of the gratitude of the pomological world, etc. To our surprise, Pomona declared that she had her doubts about the Belgian professor — she said he was a very crotchety man, and although he had devoted his life to her service, yet he had such strange whims and caprices about improving fruits by a regular system of degeneration or running them out, that she could make nothing of him. “Depend upon it,” she said, “many of his sorts are worthless, — most of them have sickly constitutions, and,” she added, with some emphasis, snapping her fingers as she spoke, “I would not give one sound healthy seedling pear, springing up under natural culture in your American soil, for all that Dr. Van Mons ever raised!” [We beg our readers to understand that these were Pomona’s words and not ours.] She gave us, after this, very special charge to impress it upon her devotees in the United States, not to be too much smitten with the love of new names, and great collections. It gave her more satisfaction to see the orchards and fruit-room of one of her liege subjects teeming with the abundance of the few sorts of real golden merit, than to see whole acres of new varieties that have no other value than that of novelty. She said, too, that it was truly amazing how this passion for collecting fruits — a genuine monomania — grew upon a poor mortal, when he was once attacked by it; so that indeed, if he could not add every season at least fifty new sorts from the continent, with some such outlandish names, (which she said she would never recognize), as *Beurré bleu d’été nouveau de Scrowsywowsy*, etc., he would positively hang himself in a fit of the blues!

Pomona further drew our attention in some sly remarks that were half earnest and half satire, to the figure that many of these “Belgian pericarps” cut at those handsome levees, which her votaries among us hold in the shape of the great September exhibitions. She said it was really droll to see, at such shows as those of our two large cities,

where there was a profusion of ripe and luscious fruit, that she would have been proud of in her own celestial orchards — to see there intermingled some hundred or so mean looking, hard green pears, that never had ripened, or never did, would, or could ripen, so as to be palatable to any but a New Zealander. “Do solicit my friends there, for the sake of my feelings,” said she, “to give the gentlemen who take such pleasure in exhibiting this degenerate foreign squad, a separate ‘green room’ for themselves.” To this remark we smiled and bowed low, though we would not venture to carry out her suggestion for the world.

We had a delightful little chat with Flora, about some new plants which she told us grew in certain unknown passes in the Rocky Mountains, and mountainous parts of Mexico, that will prove quite hardy with us, and which neither Mr. Fortune nor the London Horticultural Society know anything about. But she finally informed us, that her real object in making herself visible on the earth at present, with Madam Pomona, was to beg us to enter her formal and decided protest against the style of decorations called after her name, and which had, for several years past, made the otherwise brilliant Autumnal Horticultural Shows in our quarter of the globe so disagreeable an offering to her. “To call the monstrous formations, which, under the name of temples, stars, tripods, and obelisks — great bizarre masses of flowers plastered on wooden frames — to call these after her name, ‘Floral designs,’ was,” she said, “even more than the patience of a goddess could bear.” If those who make them are sincerely her devoted admirers, as they profess to be, she begged us to say to them, that, unless they had designs upon her flow of youth and spirits, that had hitherto been eternal, she trusted they would hereafter desist.

We hereupon ventured to offer some apology for the offending parties, by saying they were mostly the work of the “bone and sinew” of the gardening profession, men with blunt fingers but earnest souls, who worked for days upon what they fancied was a worthy offering to be laid

upon her altars. She smiled, and said the intention was accepted, but not its results, and hinted something about the same labor being performed under the direction of the more tasteful eye of ladies, who should invent and arrange, while the fingers of honest toil wrought the ruder outline only.

Flora then hinted to us, how much more beautiful flowers were when arranged in the simplest forms, and said, when combined or moulded into shapes or devices, nothing more elaborate or artificial than a vase form is really pleasing. Baskets, moss-covered and flower-woven, she said, were thought elegant enough for Paradise itself. "There are not only baskets," continued she, "that are beautiful lying down, and showing inside a rich mosaic of flowers — each basket, large or small, devoted, perhaps, to some one choice flower in its many varieties; but baskets on the tops of mossy pedestals, bearing tasteful emblems interwoven on their sides; and baskets hanging from ceilings, or high festooned arches — in which case they display in the most graceful and becoming manner, all manner of drooping and twining plants, the latter stealing out of the nest or body of the basket, and waving to and fro in the air they perfume." "Then there is the garland," continued our fair guest; "it is quite amazing, that since the days of those clever and harmonious people, the Greeks, no one seems to know anything of the beauty of the garland. Now in fact nothing is more beautiful or becoming than flowers woven into tasteful garlands or chaplets. They form a circle — that emblem of eternity, so full of dread and mystery to you mortals — and the size is one that may be carried in the hand or hung up, and it always looks lovely. Believe me, nothing is prettier in my eyes, which, young as they look, have had many thousands of your years of experience, than a fresh, green garland woven with bright roses."

As she said this, she seized a somewhat common basket that lay near us, and passing her delicate fingers over it, as she plucked a few flowers from the surrounding plants, she held it, a picture of magical verdure and blossoms, aloft in

the air over our heads, while on her arm she hung a garland as exquisitely formed and proportioned as if cut in marble, with, at the same time, all the airiness which only flowers can have. The effect was ravishing! simplicity, delicacy, gracefulness, and perfume. The goddess moved around us with an air and in an attitude compared with which the glories of Titian and Raphael seem tame and cold, and as the basket was again passing over our head, we were just reaching out our hand to detain the lovely vision, when, unluckily, the parti-colored dog that guards our demesne, broke into a loud bark; Pomona hastily seized her golden apple; Flora dropped our basket (which fell to the ground in its wonted garb of plain willow), and both vanished into the dusky gloom of the night shadows; at that moment, suddenly rising up in our hammock, we found we had been — dreaming.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### *INFLUENCE OF HORTICULTURE*

**T**HE multiplication of horticultural societies is taking place so rapidly of late, in various parts of the country, as to lead one to reflect somewhat on their influence, and that of the art they foster, upon the character of our people.

Most persons, no doubt, look upon them as performing a work of some usefulness and elegance, by promoting the culture of fruits and flowers, and introducing to all parts of the country the finer species of vegetable productions. In other words, they are thought to add very considerably to the amount of physical gratifications which every American citizen endeavors, and has a right to endeavor, to assemble around him.

Granting all the foregoing, we are inclined to claim also, for horticultural pursuits, a political and moral influence vastly more significant and important than the mere gratification of the senses. We think, then, in a few words, that horticulture and its kindred arts, tend strongly to fix the habits, and elevate the character, of our whole rural population.

One does not need to be much of a philosopher to remark that one of the most striking of our national traits, is the spirit of unrest. It is the grand energetic element which leads us to clear vast forests, and settle new states, with a rapidity unparalleled in the world's history; the spirit, possessed with which, our yet comparatively scanty people do not find elbow-room enough in a territory already in their possession, and vast enough to hold the greatest of ancient empires; which drives the emigrant's wagon across vast sandy deserts to California, and over Rocky Mountains to Oregon and the Pacific; which builds up a great



State like Ohio in 30 years, so populous, civilized and productive, that the bare recital of its growth sounds like a genuine miracle to European ears; and which overruns and takes possession of a whole empire, like that of Mexico, while the cabinets of old monarchies are debating whether or not it is necessary to interfere and restore the balance of power in the new world as in the old.

This is the grand and exciting side of the picture. Turn it in another light, and study it, and the effect is by no means so agreeable to the reflective mind. The spirit of unrest, followed into the bosom of society, makes of man a feverish being, in whose Tantalus' cup repose is the unattainable drop. Unable to take root anywhere, he leads, socially and physically, the uncertain life of a tree transplanted from place to place, and shifted to a different soil every season.

It has been shrewdly said that what qualities we do not possess, are always in our mouths. Our countrymen, it seems to us, are fonder of no one Anglo-Saxon word than the term *settle*.\* It was the great object of our forefathers to find a proper spot to settle. Every year, large numbers of our population from the older States go west to settle; while those already west, *pull up*, with a kind of desperate joy, their yet new-set *stakes*, and go farther west to settle again. So truly national is the word, that all the business of the country, from State debts to the products of a truck farm, are not satisfactorily adjusted till they are "settled;" and no sooner is a passenger fairly on board one of our river steamers, than he is politely and emphatically invited by a sable representative of its executive power, to "call at the captain's office and *settle!*"

Yet, as a people, we are never settled. It is one of the first points that strikes a citizen of the old world, where something of the dignity of repose, as well as the value of action, enters into their ideal of life. De Tocqueville says, in speaking of our national trait:

\* Anglo-Saxon *sath-lian*, from the verb *settan*, to set, to cease from motion, to fix a dwelling-place, to repose, etc. — A. J. D.

"At first sight, there is something surprising in this strange unrest of so many happy men, restless in the midst of abundance. The spectacle itself is, however, as old as the world. The novelty is to see a whole people furnish an exemplification of it.

"In the United States a man builds a house to spend his latter years in, and sells it before the roof is on; he brings a field into tillage, and leaves other men to gather the crops; he embraces a profession, and gives it up; he settles in a place, which he soon after leaves, in order to carry his changeable longings elsewhere. If his private affairs leave him any leisure he instantly plunges into the vortex of politics; and if at the end of a year of unremitting labor, he finds he has a few days' vacation, his eager curiosity whirls him over the vast extent of the United States, and he will travel fifteen hundred miles in a few days, to shake off his happiness."

Much as we admire the energy of our people, we value no less the love of order, the obedience to law, the security and repose of society, the love of home, and the partiality to localities endeared by birth or association, of which it is in some degree the antagonist. And we are therefore deeply convinced that whatever tends, without checking due energy of character, but to develop along with it certain virtues that will keep it within due bounds, may be looked upon as a boon to the nation.

Now the difference between the son of Ishmael, who lives in tents, and that man who has the strongest attachment to the home of his fathers, is, in the beginning, one mainly of outward circumstances. He whose sole property is a tent and a camel, whose ties to one spot are no stronger than the cords which confine his habitation to the sandy floor of the desert, who can break up his encampment at an hour's notice, and choose a new and equally agreeable site, fifty miles distant, the next day — such a person is very little likely to become much more strongly attached to any one spot of earth than another.

The condition of a western emigrant is not greatly dissimi-

lar. That long covered wagon, which is the Noah's ark of his preservation, is also the concrete essence of house and home to him. He emigrates, he "squats," he "locates," but before he can be fairly said to have a fixed home, the spirit of unrest besets him; he sells his "diggins" to some less adventurous pioneer, and tackling the wagon of the wilderness, migrates once more.

It must not be supposed, large as is the infusion of restlessness in our people, that there are not also large exceptions to the general rule. Else there would never be growing villages and prosperous towns. Nay, it cannot be overlooked by a careful observer, that the tendency "to settle" is slowly but gradually on the increase, and that there is, in all the older portions of the country, growing evidence that the Anglo-Saxon love of home is gradually developing itself out of the Anglo-American love of change.\*

It is not difficult to see how strongly horticulture contributes to the development of local attachments. In it lies the most powerful philtre that civilized man has yet found to charm him to one spot of earth. It transforms what is only a tame meadow and a bleak aspect, into an Eden of interest and delights. It makes all the difference between Araby the blest, and a pine barren. It gives a bit of soil, too insignificant to find a place in the geography of the earth's surface, such an importance in the eyes of its possessor, that he finds it more attractive than countless acres of unknown and unexplored territory. In other words, it contains the mind and soul of the man, materialized in many of the fairest and richest forms of nature, so that he looks upon it as tearing himself up, root and branch, to ask him to move a mile to the right or the left. Do we need to say more, to prove that it is the panacea that really "settles" mankind?

\* The philosophy of Mr. Downing in this chapter is profound and his analysis of American character most penetrating. The evil effects of this spirit of unrest and the desirability of neutralizing it through the simultaneous cultivation of the soil and of home ties were never more manifest than in these days of revolution and reconstruction following the World War. — F. A. W.

It is not, therefore, without much pleasurable emotion, that we have had notice lately of the formation of five new horticultural societies, the last at St. Louis, and most of them west of the Alleghanies. Whoever lives to see the end of the next cycle of our race, will see the great valleys of the West the garden of the world; and we watch with interest the first development, in the midst of the busy fermentation of its active masses, of that beautiful and quiet spirit, of the joint culture of the earth and the heart, that is destined to give a tone to the future character of its untold millions.

The increased love of home and the garden, in the older states, is a matter of every-day remark; and it is not a little curious, that just in proportion to the intelligence and *settled* character of its population, is the amount of interest manifested in horticulture. Thus, the three most settled of the original States, we suppose to be Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania; and in these states horticulture is more eagerly pursued than in any others. The first named state has now seven horticultural societies; the second, seven; the third, three. Following out the comparison in the cities, we should say that Boston had the most settled population, Philadelphia the next, and New York the least so of any city in the Union; and it is well known that the horticultural society of Boston is at this moment the most energetic one in the country, and that it is stimulated by the interest excited by societies in all its neighboring towns. The Philadelphia society is exceedingly prosperous; while in New York, we regret to say, that the numerous efforts that have been made to establish firmly a society of this kind have not, up to this time, resulted in any success whatever. Its mighty tide of people is as yet too much possessed with the spirit of business and of unrest." \*

\* "The New-York Horticultural Society" was organized in the spring of 1852, and is already in a flourishing condition. — G. W. C.

## CHAPTER XXV

### ON FEMININE TASTE IN RURAL AFFAIRS \*

WHAT a very little fact sometimes betrays the national character; and what an odd thing this national character is! Look at a Frenchman. He eats, talks, lives in public. He is only happy when he has spectators. In town, on the boulevards, in the *cafe*, at places of public amusement, he is all enjoyment. But in the country — ah, there he never goes willingly; or else, he only goes to sentimentalize, or to entertain his town friends. Even the natural born country people seem to find nature and solitude *ennuyant*, and so collect in little villages to keep each other in spirits! The Frenchman eats and sleeps almost any where; but he is never “at home but when he is abroad.”

Look, on the other hand, at John Bull. He only lives what he feels to be a rational life, when he lives in the country. His country place is to him a little Juan Fernandez island; it contains his own family, his own castle, everything that belongs to him. He hates the smoke of town; he takes root in the soil. His horses, his dogs, his trees, are not separate existences; they are parts of himself. He is social with a reservation. Nature is nearer akin to him than strange men. His dogs are truly attached to him; he doubts if his fellows are. People often play the hypocrite; but the trees in his park never deceive him. Home is to him the next best place to heaven.

And only a little narrow strait of water divides these two nations!

Shall we ever have a distinct national character? Will a country, which is settled by every people of the old world, — a dozen nations, all as distinct as the French and the

\* Original date of April, 1849.

English, — ever crystallize into a symmetrical form — something distinct and homogeneous? And what will that national character be?

Certainly no one, who looks at our comparative isolation — at the broad ocean that separates us from such external influences — at the mighty internal forces of new government and new circumstances, which continually act upon us, — and, above all, at the mighty vital force of the



FIG. 39. TRUMPET NARCISSUS ALONG THE GARDEN WALK

Yankee Constitution, which every year swallows hundreds of thousands of foreigners, and digests them all; no one can look reflectingly on all this, and not see that there is a national type, which will prevail over all the complexity, which various origin, foreign manners, and different religions bring to our shores.

The English are, perhaps, the most distinct of civilized nations, in their nationality. But they had almost as mixed an origin as ourselves, — Anglo-Saxon, Celts, Roman,

Danish, Norman; all these apparently discordant elements, were fused so successfully into a great and united people.

That a hundred years hence will find us quite as distinct and quite as developed, in our national character, we cannot doubt. What that character will be, in all its phases, no one at present can precisely say; but that the French and English elements will largely influence it in its growth, and yet, that in morals, in feeling, and in heart, we shall be entirely distinct from either of those nations, is as clear to us as a summer noon.

We are not going into a profound philosophical dissertation on the political or the social side of national character. We want to touch very slightly on a curious little point that interests us; one that political philosophers would think quite beneath them; one that moralists would not trouble themselves about; and one that we are very much afraid nobody else will think worth notice at all; and therefore we shall set about it directly.

What is the reason American ladies don't love to work in their gardens?

It is of no use whatever, that some fifty or a hundred of our fair readers say, "we do." We have carefully studied the matter, until it has become a fact past all contradiction. They may love to "potter" a little. Three or four times in the spring they take a fancy to examine the color of the soil a few inches below the surface; they sow some China asters, and plant a few dahlias, and it is all over. Love flowers, with all their hearts, they certainly do. Few things are more enchanting to them than a fine garden; and bouquets on their center tables are positive necessities, with every lady, from Maine to the Rio Grande.

Now, we certainly have all the love of nature of our English forefathers. We love the country; and a large part of the millions, earned every year by our enterprise, is spent in creating and embellishing country homes. But, on the contrary, our wives and daughters only love gardens as the French love them—for the results. They love to walk through them; they enjoy the beauty and perfume of their

products, but only as amateurs. They know no more of that intense enjoyment of her who plans, creates, and daily watches the growth of those gardens or flowers, — no more of absolute, living enjoyment, which the English have in out-of-door pursuits, than a mere amateur, who goes through a fine gallery of pictures, knows of the intensified emotions which the painters of those pictures experienced in their souls, when they gazed on the gradual growth and perfected splendor of their finest masterpieces.

As it is plain, from our love of the country, that we are not French at heart, this manifestation that we complain of, must come from our natural tendency to copy the social manners of the most polished nation in the world. And it is indeed quite wonderful how, being scarcely in the least affected by the *morale*, we still borrow almost instinctively, and entirely without being aware of it, so much from *la belle France*. That our dress, mode of life, and intercourse, is largely tinged with French taste, every traveller notices. But it goes farther. Even the plans of our houses become more and more decidedly French. We have had occasion, lately, to make considerable explorations in the domestic architecture of France and England, and we have noticed some striking national peculiarities. One of these relates to the connection of the principal apartments. In a French house, the beau ideal is to have everything *ensuite*; all the rooms open into each other; or, at least, as many of the largest as will produce a fine effect. In an English house, every room is complete in itself. It may be very large, and very grand, but it is all the worse for being connected with any other room; for that destroys the privacy which an Englishman so much loves.

Does any one, familiar with the progress of building in the United States for the last ten years, desire to be told which mode we have followed? And yet, there are very few who are aware that our love of folding-doors, and suites of apartments, is essentially French.

Now our national taste in gardening and outdoor employments, is just in the process of formation. Honestly



and ardently believing that the loveliest and best women in the world are those of our own country, we cannot think of their losing so much of their own and nature's bloom, as only to enjoy their gardens by the results, like the French, rather than through the development, like the English. We would gladly show them how much they lose. We would convince them, that only to pluck the fullblown flower, is like a first introduction to it, compared with the lifelong friendship of its mistress, who has nursed it from its first two leaves; and that the real zest of our enjoyment of nature, even in a garden, lies in our looking at her, not like a spectator who admires, but like a dear and intimate friend, to whom, after long intimacy, she reveals sweets wholly hidden from those who only come to her in full dress, and in the attitude of formal visitors.

If any one wishes to know how completely and intensely English women enter into the spirit of gardening, he has only to watch the wife of the most humble artisan who settles in any of our cities. She not only has a pot of flowers — her back yard is a perfect curiosity shop of botanical rarities. She is never done with training, and watering and caring for them. And truly, they reward her well; for who ever saw such large geraniums, such fresh daisies, such ruddy roses! Comparing them with the neglected and weak specimens in the garden of her neighbor, one might be tempted to believe that they had been magnetized by the charm of personal fondness of their mistress, into a life and beauty not common to other plants.

Mr. Colman, in his "European Tour," seems to have been struck by this trait, and gave so capital a portrait of rural accomplishments in a lady of rank he had the good fortune to meet, that we cannot resist the temptation of turning the picture to the light once more:

"I had no sooner, then, entered the house, where my visit had been expected, than I was met with an unaffected cordiality, which at once made me at home. In the midst of gilded halls, and hosts of liveried servants, of dazzling lamps and glittering mirrors, redoubling the highest triumphs of art and of taste; in the midst of books, and statues, and

pictures, and all the elegancies and refinements of luxury; in the midst of titles, and dignitaries, and ranks allied to regal grandeur, — there was one object which transcended and eclipsed them all, and showed how much the nobility of character surpassed the nobility of rank, the beauty of refined and simple manners all the adornments of art, the scintillations of the soul, beaming from the eyes, the purest gems that ever glittered in a princely diadem. In person, education and improvement, in quickness of perception, in facility and elegance of expression, in accomplishments and taste, in a frankness and gentleness of manner, tempered by a modesty which courted confidence and inspired respect, and in a high moral tone and sentiment, which, like a bright halo, seemed to encircle the whole person, — I confess the fictions of poetry become substantial, and the *beau ideal* of my youthful imagination was realized.

“In the morning I first met her at prayers; for, to the honor of England, there is scarcely a family, among the hundreds whose hospitality I have shared, where the duties of the day are not preceded by family worship; and the master and the servant, the parent and the child, the teacher and the taught, the friend and the stranger, come together to recognize and strengthen the sense of their common equality, in the presence of their common Father, and to acknowledge their equal dependence upon his care and mercy. She was then kind enough to tell me, after her morning’s arrangements, she claimed me for the day. She first showed me her children, whom, like the Roman mother, she deemed her brightest jewels, and arranged their studies and occupations for the day. She then took me two or three miles on foot, to visit a sick neighbor; and, while performing this act of kindness, left me to visit some of the cottages upon the estate, whose inmates I found loud in the praises of her kindness and benefactions. Our next excursion was to see some of the finest, and largest, and most aged trees in the park, the size of which was truly magnificent; and I sympathized in the veneration which she expressed for them, which was like that with which one recalls the illustrious memory of a remote progenitor. Our next visit was to the green-houses and gardens; and she explained to me the mode adopted there, of managing the most delicate plants, and of cultivating, in the most economical and successful manner, the fruits of a warmer region. From the garden we proceeded to the cultivated fields; and she informed me of the system of husbandry pursued on the estate, the rotation of crops, the management and application of manures, the amount of seed sown, the ordinary yield, and the appropriation of the produce, with a perspicuous detail of the expenses and results. She then undertook to show me the yards and offices, the byres, the feeding stalls, the plans for saving, increasing, and managing the manure; the cattle for feeding, for breeding, the milking stock, the piggery, the poultry yard, the stables, the harness-rooms, the implement-rooms, the dairy. She explained to me the process of making the different kinds of cheese, and the general management of the milk, and the mode of feeding the stock; and then, conducting me into the bailiff’s

house, she exhibited to me the Farm Journal, and the whole systematic mode of keeping the accounts and making the returns, with which she seemed as familiar as if they were the accounts of her own wardrobe. This did not finish our grand tour; for, on my return, she admitted me into her boudoir, and showed me the secrets of her own admirable housewifery, in the exact accounts which she kept of every thing connected with the dairy, the market, the table, and the drawing-room, and the servant's hall. All this was done with a simplicity and a frankness, which showed an absence of all consciousness of any extraordinary merit in her own department, and which evidently sprang solely from a kind desire to gratify a curiosity on my part, which, I hope, under such circumstances, was not unreasonable.

"A short hour after this brought us into another relation; for the dinner bell summoned us, and this same lady was found presiding over a brilliant circle of the highest rank and fashion, with an ease, elegance, wit, intelligence, and good humor, with a kind attention to every one's wants, and unaffected concern for every one's comfort, which would lead one to suppose that this was her only and her peculiar sphere. Now I will not say how many mud-puddles we had waded through, and how many manure heaps we had crossed, and what places we had explored, and how every farming topic was discussed; but I will say that she pursued her object without any of that fastidiousness and affected delicacy, which pass with some persons for refinement, but which, in many cases, indicate a weak, if not a corrupt mind. . . .

"Now I do not say that the lady to whom I have referred was herself the manager of the farm; that rested entirely with her husband; but I have intended simply to show how gratifying to him must have been the lively interest and sympathy which she took in concerns which necessarily so much engaged his time and attention; and how the country would be divested of that dullness and *ennui*, so often complained of as inseparable from it, when a cordial and practical interest is taken in the concerns which belong to rural life. I meant also to show — and this and many other examples, which have come under my observation, emphatically do show — that an interest in, and familiarity with, even the most humble occupations of agricultural life, are not inconsistent with the highest refinements of taste, the most improved cultivation of the mind, and elegance, and dignity of manners, unsurpassed in the highest circles of society."

This picture is thoroughly English; and who do our readers suppose this lady was? Mr. Colman puts his finger on his lips, and declares that however much he may be questioned by his fair readers at home, he will make no disclosures. But other people recognize the portrait; and we understand it is that of the Duchess of Portland.



FIG. 40. DOUBLE COLUMBINES

Now, as a contrast to this, here is a little fragment — a mere bit — but enough to show the French feeling about country life. It is from one of Madame de Sevigne's charming letters; and, fond of society as she was, she certainly had as much of love of the country as belongs to her class and sex on her side of the channel. It is part of a letter written from her country home. She is writing to her daughter, and speaking of an expected visit from one of her friends:

"It follows that, after I have been to see her, she will come to see me, when, of course, I shall wish her to find my garden in good order; my walks in good order — those fine walks, of which you are so fond. Attend also, if you please, to a little suggestion in passing. You are aware that haymaking is going forward. Well, I have no haymakers. I send into the neighboring fields to press them into my service; there are none to be found; and so all my own people are summoned to make hay instead. But do you know what haymaking is? I will tell you. *Haymaking is the prettiest thing in the world. You play at turning the grass over in a meadow; and as soon as you know that, you know how to make hay.*"

Is it not capital? We italicize her description of haymaking, it is so French, and so totally unlike the account that the Duchess would have given Mr. Colman. Her garden, too; she wanted to have it *put in order before her friend arrived*. She would have shown it, not as an English woman would have done, to excite an interest in its rare and beautiful plants, and the perfection to which they had grown under her care, but that it might give her friend a pleasant promenade.

Now we have not the least desire, that American wives and daughters should have anything to do with the rough toil of the farm or the garden, beyond their own household province. We delight in the chivalry which pervades this whole country, in regard to the female character, and which even foreigners have remarked as one of the strongest national characteristics.\* But we would gladly have them

\* M. Chevalier, one of the most intelligent of recent French travellers, says, in his work on this country — "Not only does the American me-

seize on that happy medium, between the English passion for everything out of doors, and the French taste for nothing beyond the drawing room. Everything which relates to the garden, the lawn, the pleasure grounds, should claim their immediate interest. And this, not merely to walk out occasionally and enjoy it; but to know it by heart; to do it, or see it all done; to know the history of any plant, shrub, or tree, from the time it was so small as to be invisible to all but their eyes, to the time when every passer-by stops to admire and enjoy it; to live, in short, not only the indoor but the out-of-door life of a true woman in the country. Every lady may not be "born to love pigs and chickens" (though that is a good thing to be born to); but, depend upon it, she has been cut off by her mother nature with less than a shilling's patrimony, if she does not love trees, flowers, gardens, and nature, as if they were all part of herself.

We half suspect, if the truth must be told, that there is a little affectation or coquetry among some of our fair readers, in this want of hearty interest in rural occupation. We have noticed that it is precisely those who have the smallest gardens, and, therefore, who ought most naturally to wish to take the greatest interest in their culture themselves, — it is precisely those who depend entirely upon their gardener. They rest with such entire faith on the chivalry of our sex, that they gladly permit everything to be done for them, and thus lose the greatest charm which their garden could give — that of a delightful personal intimacy.

chanic and farmer relieve, as much as possible, his wife from all severe labor, all disagreeable employments, but there is also, in relation to them, and to women in general, a disposition to oblige, that is unknown among us, even in men who pique themselves upon cultivation of mind and literary education." \* \* \* \* \*

"We buy our wives with our fortunes, or we sell ourselves to them for their dowries. The American chooses her, or rather he offers himself to her for her beauty, her intelligence, and the qualities of her heart; it is the only dowry which he seeks. Thus, while we make of that which is most sacred a matter of business, these traders affect a delicacy, and an elevation of sentiment, which would have done honor to the most perfect models of chivalry."

Almost all the really enthusiastic and energetic lady gardeners that we have the pleasure of knowing, belong to the wealthiest class in this country. We have a neighbor on the Hudson, for instance, whose pleasure grounds cover many acres, whose flower garden is a miracle of beauty, and who keeps six gardeners at work all the season. But there is never a tree transplanted that she does not see its roots carefully handled; not a walk laid out that she does not mark its curves; not a parterre arranged that she does not direct its colors and grouping, and even assist in planting it. No matter what guests enjoy her hospitality, several hours every day are thus spent in out-of-door employment; and from the zeal and enthusiasm with which she always talks of everything relating to her country life, we do not doubt that she is far more rationally happy now, than when she received the homage of a circle of admirers at one of the most brilliant of foreign courts.

On the table before us, lies a letter from a lady of fortune in Philadelphia, whose sincere and hearty enthusiasm in country life always delights us. She is one of those beings who animate everything she touches, and would make a heart beat in a granite rock, if it had not the stubbornness of all "facts before the flood." She is in a dilemma now about the precise uses of lime (which has staggered many an old cultivator, by the way), and tells the story of her doubts with an earnest directness and eloquence that one seeks for in vain in the essays of our male chemico-horticultural correspondents. We are quite sure that there will be a meaning in every fruit and flower which this lady plucks from the garden, of which our fair friends, who are the disciples of the Sevigne school, have not the feeblest conception.

There are, also, we fear, those who fancy that there is something rustic, unfeminine and unrefined, about an interest in country out-of-door matters. Would we could present to them a picture which rises in our memory, at this moment, as the finest of all possible denials to such a theory. In the midst of the richest agricultural region of the northern

States, lives a lady — a young, unmarried lady; mistress of herself; of some thousands of acres of the finest lands; and a mansion which is almost the ideal of taste and refinement. Very well. Does this lady sit in her drawing room all day, to receive her visitors? By no means. You will find her, in the morning, either on horseback or driving a light carriage with a pair of spirited horses. She explores every corner of the estate; she visits her tenants, examines the crops, projects improvements, directs repairs, and is thoroughly mistress of her whole demesne. Her mansion opens into the most exquisite garden of flowers and fruits, every one of which she knows by heart. And yet this lady, so energetic and spirited in her enjoyment and management in out-of-door matters, is, in the drawing room, the most gentle, the most retiring, the most refined of her sex.

A word or two more, and upon what ought to be the most important argument of all. Exercise, fresh air, health, — are they not almost synonymous? The exquisite bloom on the cheeks of American girls, fades, in the matron, much sooner here than in England, — not alone because of the softness of the English climate, as many suppose. It is because exercise, so necessary to the maintenance of health, is so little a matter of habit and education here, and so largely insisted upon in England; and it is because exercise, when taken here at all, is taken too often as a matter of duty; that it is then only a lifeless duty, and has no soul in it; while the English woman, who takes a living interest in her rural employments, inhales new life in every day's occupation, and plants perpetual roses in her cheeks, by the mere act of planting them in her garden.

"But, Mr. Downing, think of the hot sun in this country, and our complexions!"

Yes, yes, we know it. But get up an hour earlier, fair reader, put on your broadest sun-bonnet, and your stoutest pair of gloves, and try the problem of health, enjoyment and beauty, before the sun gets too ardent. A great deal may be done in this way; and after a while, if your heart is in



the right place for ruralities, you will find the occupation so fascinating that you will gradually find yourself able to enjoy keenly what was at first only a very irksome sort of duty.

V

## CHAPTER XXVI

### A SPRING GOSSIP \*

**I**F any man feels no joy in the spring, then has he no warm blood in his veins!" So said one of the old dramatists, two hundred years ago; and so we repeat his very words in this month of May, eighteen hundred and fifty. Not to feel the sweet influences of this young and creative season, is indeed like being blind to the dewy brightness of the rainbow, or deaf to the rich music of the mocking-bird. Why, everything feels it; the gushing, noisy brook; the full-throated robin; the swallows circling and sailing through the air. Even the old rocks smile, and look less hard and stony; or at least try to by the help of the moss, lately grown green in the rain and sunshine of April. And, as Lowell has so finely said,

"Every clod feels a stir of might,  
An instinct within it that reaches and towers;  
And grasping blindly above it for light,  
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers."

From the time when the maple hangs out its little tufts of ruddy threads on the wood side, or the first crocus astonishes us with its audacity in embroidering the ground with gold almost before the snow has left it, until June flings us her first garlands of roses to tell us that summer is at hand, all is excitement in the country — real poetic excitement — some spark of which even the dullest souls that follow the oxen must feel.

"No matter how barren the past may have been,  
'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green."

And you, most sober and practical of men, as you stand in your orchard and see the fruit trees all dressed in spring

\* Original date of May, 1850.

robes of white, and pink, and blush, and immediately set about divining what a noble crop you will have, "if nothing happens" — meaning, thereby, if everything happens as nature for the most part makes it happen — you, too, are a little of a poet in spite of yourself. You imagine — you hope — you believe — and, from that delicate gossamer fabric of peach blossoms, you conjure out of the future, bushels of downy, ripe, ruddy, and palpable, though melting rareripes, every one of which is such as was never seen but at prize exhibitions, when gold medals bring out horticultural prodigies. If this is not being a poet — a practical one, if you please, but still a poet — then are there no gay colors in peacocks' tails.

And as for our lady readers in the country, who hang over the sweet firstlings of the flowers that the spring gives us, with as fresh and as pure a delight every year as if the world (and violets) were just new born, and had not been convulsed, battered, and torn by earthquakes, wars, and revolutions, for more than six thousand years; why, we need not waste time in proving them to be poets, and their lives — or at least all that part of them passed in delicious rambles in the woods, or sweet toils in the garden — pure poetry. However stupid the rest of creation may be, they, at least, see and understand that those early gifts of the year, yes, and the very spring itself, are types of fairer and better things. They, at least, feel that this wonderful resurrection of life and beauty out of the death-sleep of winter, has a meaning in it that should bring glad tears into our eyes, being, as it is, a foreshadowing of that transformation and awakening of us all in the spiritual spring of another and a higher life.

The flowers of spring are not so gay and gorgeous as those of summer and autumn. Except those flaunting gentlemen-ushers the Dutch tulips (which, indeed, have been coaxed into gay liveries since Mynheer fell sick of flori-mania), the spring blossoms are delicate, modest, and subdued in color, and with something more of freshness and vivacity about them than is common in the lilies, roses, and dahlias of a

later and hotter time of the year. The fact that the violet blooms in the spring, is of itself enough to make the season dear to us. We do not now mean the pansy, or three-colored violet — the Johnny-jump-up of the cottager — that little, roguish coquette of a blossom, all animation and boldness — but the true violet of the poets; the delicate, modest, retiring violet, dim,

“But sweeter than the lid’s of Juno’s eyes,  
Or Cytherea’s breath.”

The flower that has been loved, and praised, and petted, and cultivated, at least three thousand years, and is not in the least spoiled by it; nay, has all the unmistakable freshness still, of a nature ever young and eternal.

There is a great deal, too, in the associations that cluster about spring flowers. Take that early yellow flower, popularly known as “Butter and Eggs,” and the most common bulb in all our gardens, though introduced from abroad. It is not handsome, certainly, although one always welcomes its hardy face with pleasure; but when we know that it suggested that fine passage to Shakespeare —

“Daffodils  
That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty” —

we feel that the flower is for ever immortalized; and though not half so handsome as our native blood-root, with its snowy petals, or our wood anemone, tinged like the first blush of morning, yet still the daffodil, embalmed by poesy, like a fly in amber, has a value given it by human genius that causes it to stir the imagination more than the most faultless and sculpture-like camellia that ever bloomed in marble conservatory.

A pleasant task it would be to linger over the spring flowers, taking them up one by one, and inhaling all their fragrance and poetry, leisurely — whether the cowslips, hyacinths, daisies, and hawthorns of the garden, or the honeysuckles, trilliums, wild moccasins, and liverworts of

the woods. But we should grow garrulous on the subject and the season, if we were to wander thus into details.

Among all the flowers of spring, there are, however, few that surpass in delicacy, freshness, and beauty, that common and popular thing, an apple blossom. Certainly, no one would plant an apple tree in his park or pleasure ground; for, like a hard day-laborer, it has a bent and bowed-down look in its head and branches, that ill accord with the graceful bending of the elm, or the well-rounded curve of the maple. But as the day laborer has a soul, which at one time or another must blossom in all its beauty, so too has the apple-tree a flower that challenges the world to surpass it, whether for the delicacy with which the white and red are blended — as upon the cheek of fairest maiden of sixteen — or the wild grace and symmetry of its cinquefoil petals, or the harmony of its coloring heightened by the tender verdure of the bursting leaves that surround it. We only mention this to show what a wealth of beauty there is in common and familiar objects in the country; and if any of our town readers are so unfortunate as never to have seen an apple orchard in full bloom, then have they lost one of the fairest sights that the month of April has in her kaleidoscope.

Spring, in this country, is not the tedious jade that she is in England, — keeping one waiting from February till June, while she makes her toilet, and fairly puts her foot on the daisy-spangled turf. For the most part, she comes to us with a quick bound; and, to make amends for being late, she showers down such a wealth of blossoms, that our gardens and orchards, at the end of April, look as if they were turned into fairy parterres, so loaded are they — especially the fruit trees — with beauty and promise. An American spring may be said to commence fairly with the blossom of the apricot or the elm tree, and end with the ripening of the first strawberries.

To end with strawberries! What a finale to one's life. More sanguinary, perhaps (as there is a stain left on one's fingers sometimes), but not less delicious than to

“Die of a rose in aromatic pain.”

But it is a fitting close to such a beautiful season to end with such a fruit as this. We believe, indeed, that strawberries, if the truth could be known, are the most popular of fruits. People always affect to prefer the peach, or the orange, or perhaps the pear; but this is only because these stand well in the world — are much talked of — and can give “the most respectable references.” But take our word for it, if the secret preference, the concealed passion, of every lover of fruit could be got at, without the formality of a public trial, the strawberry would be found out to be the little betrayer of hearts. Was not Linnæus cured of the gout by them? And did not even that hard-hearted monster, Richard the III, beseech “My Lord of Ely” to send for some of “the good ‘strawberries” from his garden at Holborn? Nay, an Italian poet has written a whole poem, of nine hundred lines or more, entirely upon strawberries. “Strawberries and sugar” are to him what “sack and sugar” was to Falstaff — “the indispensable companion — the sovereign remedy for all evil — the climax of good.” In short, he can do no more in wishing a couple of new married friends of his the completest earthly happiness, than to say —

“E a dire che ogni cosa lieta vada,  
Su le Fragole il zucchero le cada.”

In short, to sum up all that earth can prize,  
May they have sugar to their strawberries!

There are few writers who have treated of the spring and its influences more fittingly than some of the English essayists; for the English have the key to the poetry of rural life. Indeed, we cannot perhaps give our readers greater pleasure than by ending this article with the following extract from one of the papers of that genial and kindly writer, Leigh Hunt:

“The lightest thoughts have their roots in gravity; and the most fugitive colors of the world are set off by the mighty background of eternity. One of the greatest pleasures of so light and airy a thing as the vernal season, arises

from the consciousness that the world is young again; that the spring has come round; that we shall not all cease, and be no world. Nature has begun again, and not begun for nothing. One fancies somehow that she could not have the heart to put a stop to us in April or May. She may pluck away a poor little life here and there; nay, many blossoms of youth, — but not all, — not the whole garden of life. She prunes, but does not destroy. If she did, — if she were in the mind to have done with us, — to look upon us as a sort of experiment not worth going on with, as a set of ungenial and obstinate compounds, which refused to co-operate in her sweet designs, and could not be made to answer in the working, — depend upon it, she would take pity on our incapability and bad humors, and conveniently quash us in some dismal, sullen winter's day, just at the natural dying of the year, most likely in November; for Christmas is a sort of spring itself — a winter flowering. We care nothing for arguments about storms, earthquakes, or other apparently unseasonable interruptions of our pleasures. We imitate, in that respect, the magnanimous indifference, or what appears to be such, of the great mother herself, knowing that she means us the best in the gross; and also that we may all get our remedies for these evils in time, if we will only co-operate. People in South America, for instance, may learn from experience, and build so as to make a comparative nothing of those rockings of the ground. It is of the gross itself that we speak; and sure we are, that with an eye to that, Nature does not feel as Pope ventures to say she does, or sees 'with equal eye' —

'Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,  
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.'

"He may have flattered himself that he should think it a fine thing for his little poetship to sit upon a star, and look grand in his own eyes, from an eye so very dispassionate; but Nature, who is the author of passion, and joy, and sorrow, does not look upon animate and inanimate, depend upon it,

with the same want of sympathy. 'A world' full of hopes, and loves, and endeavors, and of her own life and loveliness, is a far greater thing in her eyes, rest assured, than a 'bubble;' and, *à fortiori*, many worlds, or a 'system,' far greater than the 'atom,' talked of with so much complacency by this divine little whipper-snapper. *Ergo*, the moment the kind mother gives promise of a renewed year, with these green and budding signals, be certain she is not going to falsify them; and that being sure of April, we are sure as far as November. As for an existence any further, that, we conceive, depends somewhat upon how we behave ourselves; and therefore we would exhort everybody to do their best for the earth, and all that is upon it, in order that it and they may be thought worth continuance.

"What! Shall we be put into a beautiful garden, and turn up our noses at it, and call it a 'vale of tears,' and all sorts of bad names (helping thereby to make it so), and yet confidently reckon that nature will never shut it up, and have done with it, or set about forming a better stock of inhabitants? Recollect, we beseech you, dear 'Lord Worldly Wiseman,' and you, 'Sir Having,' and my 'Lady Greedy,' that there is reason for supposing that man was not always an inhabitant of this very fashionable world, and somewhat larger globe; and that perhaps the chief occupant before him was only an inferior species to ourselves (odd as you may think it), who could not be brought to know what a beautiful place he lived in, and so had a different chance given him in a different shape. Good heavens! If there were none but mere ladies and gentlemen, and city-men, and soldiers, upon earth, and no poets, readers, and milk-maids, to remind us that there is such a thing as Nature, we really should begin to tremble for Almacks and Change Alley (the 'upper ten' and Wall-street), about the 20th of next October."



## CHAPTER XXVII

### *ECONOMY IN GARDENING \**

**M**R. COLMAN, in his *Agricultural Tour*,† remarks, that his observations abroad convinced him that the Americans are the most extravagant people in the world; and the truth of the remark is corroborated by the experience of every sensible traveller that returns from Europe. The much greater facility of getting money here, makes us more regardless of system in its expenditure; and the income of many an estate abroad, amounting to twenty thousand dollars, is expended with an exactness, and nicety of calculation, that would astonish persons in this country, who have only an income of twenty hundred dollars. Abroad, it is the study of those who have, how to save; or, in the case of spending, how to get the most for their money. At home, it seems to be the desire of every body to get — and, having obtained wealth, to expend it in the most lavish and careless manner.

There are, again, many who wish to be economical in their disbursements, but find, in a country where labor is one of the dearest of commodities, ‡ that every thing which is attained by the expenditure of labor, costs so much more than they had supposed, that moderate “improvements”

\* Original date of May, 1849.

† This and several other references to Mr. Colman’s “*Agricultural Tour*” show that Mr. Downing was deeply impressed. Rev. Henry Colman of Massachusetts, after making extended agricultural surveys in this country, visited Europe (1843) and wrote extensively of his travels and observations. Besides several volumes of letters he published two volumes of “*European Agriculture and Rural Economy*,” in Boston (1846–48). — F. A. W.

‡ At the time this was written, fairly good farm labor generally received \$15 a month “and board.” A high price for agricultural labor was \$1 a day, often working “from sun-up to sun-down.” — F. A. W.

— as we call all kinds of building and gardening in this country — in a short time consume a handsome competence.

The fact, that in no country is labor better paid for than in ours, is one that has much to do with the success and progress of the country itself. Where the day laborer is so poorly paid, that he must, of necessity, always be a day laborer, it follows, inevitably, that the condition of the largest number of human beings in the state must remain nearly stationary. On the other hand, in a community where the industrious, prudent, and intelligent day laborer can certainly rise to a more independent position, it is equally evident that the improvement of national character, and the increase of wealth, must go on rapidly together.

But, just in proportion to the ease with which men accumulate wealth, will they desire to spend it; and, in spending it, to obtain the utmost satisfaction which it can produce. Among the most rational modes of doing this, in the country, are building and gardening; and hence, every year, we find a greater number of our citizens endeavoring to realize the pleasures of country life.

Now building is sufficiently cheap with us. A man may build a comfortable cottage for a few hundred dollars, which abroad would cost a few thousands. But the moment he touches a spade to the ground, to plant a tree, or to level a hillock, that moment his farm is taxed three or four times as heavily as in Europe; and as he builds in a year, but “gardens” all his life, it is evident that his out-of-door expenses must be systematized, or economized, or he will find his income greatly the loser by it. Many a citizen, who has settled in the country with the greatest enthusiasm, has gone back to town in disgust at the unsuspected cost of country pleasures.

And yet, there are ways in which economy and satisfactory results may be combined in country life. There are always two ways of arriving at a result; and, in some cases, that mode least usually pursued is the better and more satisfactory one.

The price of the cheapest labor in the country generally,

averages 80 cents to \$1 per day. Now we have no wish whatever to lower the price of labor; we would rather feel that, by and by, we could afford to pay even more. But we wish either to avoid unnecessary expenditure for labor in producing a certain result, or to arrive at some mode of insuring that the dollar a day, paid for labor, shall be fairly and well earned.

Four-fifths of all the gardening labor performed in the eastern and middle states is performed by Irish emigrants.\* Always accustomed to something of oppression on the part of landlords and employers, in their own country, it is not surprising that their old habits stick close to them here; and as a class, they require far more watching to get a fair day's labor from them than many of our own people. On the other hand, there is no workman who is more stimulated by the consciousness of working on his own account than an Irishman. He will work stoutly and faithfully, from early to late, to accomplish a job of his own seeking, or which he has fairly contracted for, and accomplish it in a third less time than if working by the day.

The deduction which experienced employers in the country draw from this, is, never to employ "rough hands," or persons whose ability and steadiness have not been well proved, by the day or month, but always by contract, piece or job. The saving to the employer is large; and the laborer, while he gets fairly paid, is induced, by a feeling of greater independence, or to sustain his own credit, to labor faithfully and without wasting the time of his employer.

We saw a striking illustration of this lately, in the case of two neighbors, — both planting extensive orchards, and requiring, therefore, a good deal of extra labor. One of them had all the holes for his trees dug by contract, of good size, and two spades deep, for six cents per hole. The other had it executed by the day, and by the same class of labor, — foreigners, newly arrived. We had the curiosity to ask a few questions, to ascertain the difference of cost in the two cases; and found, as we expected, that the cost in the day's

\* This situation also has changed since 1849. — F. A. W.

work system was about ten cents per hole, or more than a third beyond what it cost by the job.

Now, whether a country place is large or small, there is always, in the course of the season, more or less extra work to be performed. The regular gardener, or workman, must generally be hired by the day or month; though we know instances of everything being done by contract. But all this extra work can, in almost all cases, be done by contract, at a price greatly below what it would otherwise cost. Trenching, subsoiling, preparing the ground for orchards or kitchen gardens, or even ploughing, and gathering crops, may be done very much cheaper by contract than by day's labor.

In Germany, the whole family, including women and children, work in the gardens and vineyards; and they always do the same here when they have land in their own possession. Now in every garden, vineyard, or orchard, there is a great deal of light work, that may be as well performed by the younger members of such a family as by any others. Hence, we learn that the Germans, in the large vineyards now growing on the Ohio, are able to cultivate the grape more profitably than other persons; and hence, German families, accustomed to this kind of labor, may be employed by contract in doing certain kinds of horticultural labors, at a great saving to the employer.

Another mode of economizing, in this kind of expenditure, is by the use of all possible labor saving machines. One of our correspondents — a practical gardener — recommended, in our last number, that the kitchen garden, in this country, in places of any importance, should always be placed near the stables, to save trouble and time in carting manure; and should be so arranged as to allow the plough and cultivator to be used, instead of the spade and hoe. This is excellent and judicious advice, and exactly adapted to this country. In parts of Europe where garden labor can be had for 20 cents a day, the kitchen garden may properly be treated with such nicety that not only good vegetables, but something ornamental shall be attained by

it. But here, where the pay is as much for one man's labor as that of five men's labor is worth in Germany, it is far better to cheapen the cost of vegetables, and pay for ornamental work where it is more needed.

So, too, with regard to every instance, where the more cheap and rapid working of an improved machine, or implement, may be substituted for manual labor. In several of the largest country seats on the Hudson, where there is so great an extent of walks and carriage road, that several men would be employed almost constantly in keeping them in order, they are all cleaned of weeds in a day by the aid of the horse hoe for gravel walks. In all such cases as these, the proprietor not only gets rid of the trouble and care of employing a large number of workmen, but of the annoyance of paying more than their labor is fairly worth for the purpose in question.

There are many modes of economizing in the expenditures of a country place, which time, and the ingenuity of our countrymen will suggest, with more experience. But there is one which has frequently occurred to us, and which is so obvious that we are surprised that no one has adopted it. We mean the substitution, in country places of tolerable size, of fine sheep, for the scythe, in keeping the lawn in order.\*

No one now thinks of considering his place in any way ornamental, who does not keep his lawn well mown, — not once or twice a year, for grass, but once or twice a month, for "velvet." This, to be sure, costs something; but, for general effect, the beauty of a good lawn and trees is so much greater than that of mere flowers, that no one, who values them rightly, would even think of paying dearly for the latter, and neglecting the former.

Now, half a dozen or more sheep, of some breed serviceable and ornamental, might be kept on a place properly arranged, so as to do the work of two mowers, always keeping the lawn close and short, and not only without expense, but possibly with some profit. No grass surface, except a

\* A suggestion quite as timely after the lapse of 70 years. — F. A. W.

short lawn, is neater than one cropped by sheep; and, for a certain kind of country residence, where the picturesque or pastoral, rather than the studiously elegant, is desired, sheep would heighten the interest and beauty of the scene.

In order to use sheep in this way, the place should be so arranged that the flower garden and shrubbery shall be distinct from the lawn. In many cases in England, a small portion, directly round the house, is inclosed with a wire fence, woven in a pretty pattern (worth three or four shillings a yard). This contains the flowers and shrubs, on the parlor side of the house, with a small portion of lawn dressed by the scythe. All the rest is fed by the sheep, which are folded regularly every night, to prevent accident from dogs. In this way, a beautiful lawn-like surface is maintained without the least annual outlay. We commend the practice for imitation in this country.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### *A CHAPTER ON LAWNS \**

**L**ANDSCAPE GARDENING embraces, in the circle of its perfections many elements of beauty certainly not a less number than the modern chemists count as the simplest conditions of matter. But with something of the feeling of the old philosophers, who believed that earth, air, fire and water, included everything in nature, we like to go back to plain and simple facts of breadth and importance enough to embrace a multitude of little details. The great elements then, of landscape gardening, as we understand it, are trees and grass.

Trees — delicate, beautiful, grand, or majestic trees — pliantly answering to the wooing of the softest west wind, like the willow; or bravely and sturdily defying centuries of storm and tempest, like the oak — they are indeed the great “princes, potentates, and people,” of our realm of beauty. But it is not to-day that we are permitted to sing triumphal songs in their praise.

In behalf of the grass — the turf, the lawn, — then, we ask our readers to listen to us for a short time. And by this we do not mean to speak of it in a moral sense, as did the inspired preacher of old, when he gravely told us that “all flesh is grass;” or in a style savoring of the vanities of costume, as did Prior, when he wrote the couplet,

“Those limbs in lawn and softest silk arrayed,  
From sunbeams guarded, and of winds afraid.”

Or with the keen relish of the English jockey whose only idea of “the turf” is that of the place nature has specially provided him upon which to race horses.

\* Original date of November, 1846.

Neither do we look upon grass at the present moment with the eyes of our friend Tom Thrifty, the farmer, who cuts "three tons to the acre." We have in our present mood no patience with the tall and gigantic fodder, by this name, that grows in the fertile bottoms of the West, so tall that the largest Durham is lost to view while walking through it.



FIG. 41. A WELL-MOULDED LAWN

No, we love most the soft turf which, beneath the flickering shadows of scattered trees, is thrown like a smooth natural carpet over the swelling outline of the smiling earth. Grass, not grown into tall meadows, or wild bog tussocks, but softened and refined by the frequent touches of the patient mower, till at last it becomes a perfect wonder of tufted freshness and verdure. Such grass, in short, as Shakespeare had in his mind, when he said, in words since echoed ten thousand times,

"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon that bank;"



or Ariosto, in his Orlando —

“The approaching night, not knowing where to pass,  
She checks her reins, and on the *velvet grass*,  
Beneath the umbrageous trees, her form she throws,  
To cheat the tedious hours with brief repose.”

In short, the ideal of grass is a lawn, which is, to a meadow, what “Bishop’s lawn” is to homespun Irish linen.

With such a lawn, and large and massive trees, one has indeed the most enduring sources of beauty in a country residence. Perpetual neatness, freshness and verdure in the one; ever expanding beauty, variety and grandeur in the other — what more does a reasonable man desire of the beautiful about him in the country? Must we add flowers, exotic plants, fruits? Perhaps so, but they are all, in an ornamental light, secondary to trees and grass, where these can be had in perfection. Only one other grand element is needed to make our landscape garden complete — *water*. A river, or a lake, in which the skies and the “tufted trees” may see themselves reflected, is ever an indispensable feature to a perfect landscape.

How to obtain a fine lawn is a question which has no doubt already puzzled many of our readers. They have thought, perhaps, that it would be quite sufficient to sow with grass seeds, or lay down neatly with sods, any plat of common soil, to mow it occasionally, to be repaid by the perpetual softness and verdure of an “English lawn.”

They have found, however, after a patient trial in several seasons, that an American summer, so bright and sunny as to give us, in our fruits, almost the ripeness and prodigality of the tropics, does not, like that of Britain, ever moist and humid, naturally favor the condition of fine lawns.

Beautiful as our lawns usually are in May, June, September, and October, yet in July and August, they too often lose that freshness and verdure which is for them what the rose-bloom of youth is to a beauty of seventeen — their most captivating feature.

There are not wanting admirers of fine lawns, who, wit-

nessing this summer searing, have pronounced it an impossible thing to produce a fine lawn in this country. To such an opinion we can never subscribe, for the very sufficient reason that we have seen over and over again admirable lawns wherever they have been properly treated. Fine lawns are therefore possible in all the northern half of the Union. What then are the necessary conditions to be observed, what the preliminary steps to be taken in order to obtain them? Let us answer in a few words — *deep soil, the proper kinds of grasses and frequent mowing.*

First of all, for us, deep soil. In a moist climate where showers or fogs give all vegetable nature a weekly succession of baths, one may raise a pretty bit of turf on a bare board with half an inch of soil. But here it does not require much observation or theory to teach us that if any plant is to maintain its verdure through a long and bright summer with alternate periods of wet and drouth it must have a deep soil in which to extend its roots. We have seen the roots of common clover, in trenched soil, which had descended to the depth of four feet! A surface drouth, or dry weather, had little power over a plant whose little fibres were in the cool moist understratum of that depth. And a lawn which is well established on thoroughly trenched soil, will remain, even in midsummer, of a fine dark verdure when upon the same soil untrenched every little period of dryness would give a brown and faded look to the turf.

The most essential point being a deep soil, we need not say that in our estimation any person about to lay down a permanent lawn, whether of fifty acres or fifty feet square, must provide himself against failure by this groundwork of success.

Little plats of ground are easily trenched with the spade. Large lawn surfaces are only to be managed (unless expense is not a consideration), with the subsoil plow. With this grand developer of resources, worked by two yoke of oxen, let the whole area to be laid down be thoroughly moved and broken up two feet deep. The autumn or early winter is the best season for performing this, because the

surface will have ample time to settle, and take a proper shape before spring.

After being plowed, subsoiled and harrowed, let the whole surface be entirely cleared of even the smallest stone. It is quite impossible to mow a lawn well that is not as smooth as ground can be made. Manure, if necessary, should be applied while subsoiling. We say, if necessary, for if the land is strong and in good heart it is not needed. The object in a lawn, it will be remembered, is not to obtain a heavy crop of hay, but simply to maintain perpetual verdure. Rich soil would defeat our object by causing a rank growth and coarse stalks, when we wish a short growth and soft herbage. Let the soil, therefore, be good, but not rich; depth, and the power of retaining moisture, are the truly needful qualities here. If the land is very light and sandy (the worst naturally), we would advise a mixture of loam or clay; which indeed subsoiling, when the substratum is heavy, will often most readily effect.

The soil thus prepared lies all winter to mellow and settle, with the kindly influences of the atmosphere and frost upon it. As early in the spring, as it is in friable working condition, stir it lightly with the plough and harrow, and make the surface as smooth as possible — we do not mean level, for if the ground is not a flat, nothing is so agreeable as gentle swells or undulations. But quite smooth the surface must be.

Now for the sowing; and here a farmer would advise you to “seed down with oats,” or some such established agricultural precept. Do not listen to him for a moment! What you desire is a close turf, and therefore sow nothing but grass; and do not suppose you are going to assist a weak growing plant by sowing along with it a coarser growing one to starve it.

\* Mr. Downing apparently means to say that subsoiling will bring up some of the clay subsoil and mix it with the more sandy surface soil. Attention should be directed, however, to the fact that subsoiling, a practice not greatly in vogue at the present time, is actually a damage to light sandy soils. In such soils bottom drainage may be too free, and a further opening of the subsoil will only make matters worse. — F. A. W.

Choose if possible a calm day and sow your seed as evenly as you can. The seed to be sown is a mixture of red-top (*Agrostis vulgaris*) and white clover (*Trifolium repens*), which are hardy short grasses, and on the whole make the best and most enduring lawn for this climate.\* The proportion should be about three-fourths red-top to one-fourth white clover. The seed should be perfectly clean; then sow four bushels of it to the acre; not a pint less as you hope to walk upon velvet! Finish the whole by rolling the surface evenly and neatly.

A few soft vernal showers and bright sunny days will show you a coat of verdure bright as emerald. By the first of June you will find it necessary to look about for your mower.

And this reminds us to say a word about a lawn scythe. You must not suppose, as many ignorant people do, that a lawn can be mown with a brush hook or a common meadow scythe for cutting hay in the fastest possible manner. It can only be done with a broad-bladed scythe, of the most perfect temper and quality, which will hold an edge like a razor. When used it should be set low so as to be level with the plane of the grass; when the mower is erect, he will mow without leaving any marks and with the least possible exertion.

After your lawn is once fairly established, there are but two secrets in keeping it perfect — frequent mowing and rolling. Without the first it will soon degenerate into a coarse meadow; the latter will render it firmer, closer, shorter, and finer every time it is repeated.

A good lawn must be mown every ten days or fortnight. The latter may be assumed as the proper average time in

\* We learn the blue-grass of Kentucky makes a fine lawn at the West, but with this we have no experience. — A. J. D. A more modern prescription is the following: Kentucky Blue grass, *Poa pratensis*, 9 lbs.; Rhode Island Bent grass, *Agrostis canina*, 3 lbs.; Red Top, *Agrostis alba vulgaris*, 4 lbs.; English Rye, *Lolium perenne*, 3 lbs.; White Clover (optional) *Trifolium repens*, 1 lb. The seed should be put in on a very quiet day, seventy-five to one hundred pounds of "fancy recleaned" seed per acre being used, or about one-half pound per square rod. — F. A. W.

this climate. Ten days is the usual limit of growth for the best kept lawns in England, and it is surprising how soon a coarse and wiry bit of sward will become smooth turf, under the magic influences of regular and oft repeated mowing and rolling.

Of course a lawn can only be cut when the grass is damp, and rolling is best performed directly after rain. The English always roll a few hours before using the scythe. On large lawns a donkey or light horse may be advantageously employed in performing this operation.\*

There are but few good lawns yet in America, but we have great pleasure in observing that they are rapidly multiplying. Though it may seem a heavy tax to some, yet no expenditure in ornamental gardening is, to our mind, productive of so much beauty as that incurred in producing a well-kept lawn. Without this feature no place, however great its architectural beauties, its charms of scenery, or its collections of flowers and shrubs, can be said to deserve consideration in point of landscape gardening; and with it the humble cottage grounds will possess a charm which is, among pleasure grounds, what a refined and graceful manner is in society — a universal passport to admiration.

\* The modern triplex horse lawn mower is one of the most practical tools of the present day, though the lighter motor-driven mowers answer very well. — F. A. W.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### *TREATMENT OF LAWNS\**

**A**S a lawn is the ground-work of a landscape garden, and as the management of a dressed grass surface is still a somewhat ill-understood subject with us, some of our readers will, perhaps, be glad to receive a very few hints on this subject.

The unrivalled beauty of the "velvet lawns" of England has passed into a proverb. This is undoubtedly owing, in some measure, to their superior care and keeping, but mainly to the highly favorable climate of that moist and sea-girt land. In a very dry climate it is nearly impossible to preserve that emerald freshness in a grass surface, that belongs only to a country of "weeping skies." During all the present season, on the Hudson, where we write, the constant succession of showers has given us, even in the heat of midsummer, a softness and verdure of lawn that can scarcely be surpassed in any climate or country.

Our climate, however, is in the middle states one of too much heat and brilliancy of sun, to allow us to keep our lawns in the best condition without considerable care. Beautifully verdant in spring and autumn, they are often liable to suffer from drought in midsummer. On sandy soils, this is especially the case, while on strong loamy soils, a considerable drought will be endured without injury to the good appearance of the grass. It therefore is a suggestion worthy of the attention of the lover of a fine lawn, who is looking about for a country residence, to carefully avoid one where the soil is sandy. The only remedy in such a soil is a tedious and expensive one, that of constant and plentiful top-dressing with a compost of manure and heavy

\* From the Appendix to "Landscape Gardening."

soil — marsh mud — swamp muck, or the like. Should it fortunately be the case (which is very rare) that the substratum is loamy, deep, ploughing, or trenching, by bringing up and mixing with the light surface soil some of the heavier earth from below, will speedily tend to remedy the evil.

In almost all cases where the soil is of good strength, a permanent lawn may be secured by preparing the soil deeply before finally laying it down. This may be done readily, at but little outlay, by deep ploughing — a good and cheap substitute for trenching — that is to say making the plough follow three times in the same furrow. This, with manure, if necessary, will secure a depth of soil sufficient to allow the roots of plants to strike below the effects of a surface drought.

In sowing a lawn, the best mixture of grasses that we can recommend for this climate, is a mixture of red-top and white clover — two natural grasses found by almost every roadside — in the proportion of three fourths of the former to one of the latter.

There is a common and very absurd notion current (which we have several times practically disproved), that, in order to lay down a lawn well, it is better to sow the seed along with that of some grain; thus, starving the growth of a small plant by forcing it to grow with a larger and coarser one. A whole year is always lost by this process — indeed more frequently two. Many trials have convinced us that the proper mode is to sow a heavy crop of grass at once, and we advise him who desires to have speedily a handsome turf, to follow the English practice, and sow three to four bushels of seed to the acre. If this is done early in the spring, he will have a lawn-like surface by mid-summer, and a fine close turf the next season.

After this, the whole beauty of a lawn depends on frequent mowing. Once a fortnight at the furthest, is the rule for all portions of the lawn in the neighborhood of the house, or near the principal walks. A longer growth than this will leave yellow and coarser stubble after mowing,

instead of a soft velvet surface. A broad-bladed scythe, set nearly parallel to the surface, is the instrument for the purpose, and with it a clever mower will be able to shave within half an inch of the ground, without leaving any marks. To free the surface from worm casts, etc., it is a common practice to roll the previous evening as much as may be mown the next day.

As the neatness of a well kept lawn depends mainly upon the manner in which it is mown, and as this again can only be well done where there are no inequalities in the ground, it follows that the surface should be kept as smooth as possible. Before sowing a lawn, too much pains cannot be taken to render its surface smooth and even. After this, in the spring, before the grass starts, it should be examined, and all little holes and irregularities filled up, and the same should be looked over at any annual top-dressing that may take place. The occasional use of a heavy roller, after rain, will also greatly tend to remedy all defects of this nature.

Where a piece of land is long kept in lawn, it must have an occasional top-dressing every two or three years, if the soil is rich, or every season, if it is poor. As early as possible in the spring is the best time to apply such a top-dressing, which may be a compost of any decayed vegetable or animal matter — heavier and more abounding with marsh mud, etc., just in proportion to the natural lightness of the soil. Indeed almost every season the lawn should be looked over, all weeds taken out, and any poor or impoverished spots plentifully top-dressed, and, if necessary, sprinkled with a little fresh seed. Wood ashes, either fresh or leached, is also one of the most efficient fertilizers of a lawn.

We can already, especially in the finer places on the Hudson, and about Boston, boast of many finely kept lawns, and we hope every day, as the better class of country residences increases, to see this indispensable feature in tasteful grounds becoming better understood and more universal.



## CHAPTER XXX

### *TRANSPLANTING OF TREES \**

**T**HERE is no subject on which the professional horticulturist is more frequently consulted in America, than transplanting trees. And, as it is an essential branch of Landscape Gardening — indeed, perhaps, the most important and necessary one to be practically understood in the improvement or embellishment of new country residences — we shall offer a few remarks here, with the hope of rendering it a more easy and successful practice in the hands of amateurs.

The first and most important consideration in transplanting should be the preservation of the roots. By this we do not mean a certain bulk of the larger and more important ones only, but as far as possible all the numerous small fibres and rootlets so indispensably necessary in assisting the tree to recover from the shock of removal. The coarser and larger roots serve to secure the tree in its position, and convey the fluids; but it is by means of the small fibrous roots, or the delicate and numerous points of these fibres called spongioles, that the food of plants is imbibed, and the destruction of such is manifestly in the highest degree fatal to the success of the transplanted tree. To avoid this as far as practicable, we should, in removing a tree, commence at such a distance as to include a circumference large enough to comprise the great majority of the roots.

\* In the early editions of "Landscape Gardening" Mr. Downing introduced rather extensive appendices. Of these Mr. Sargent saved only two for the Sixth Edition, viz., the one on "Transplanting of Trees" and one on the "Treatment of Lawns." These contain much interesting and original matter from Mr. Downing, and are accordingly reproduced in the present edition. The modern reader, however, will remark with surprise the extent to which English authors were quoted, English practice imitated and English opinion venerated. — F. A. W.

At that distance from the trunk we shall find most of the smaller roots, which should be carefully loosened from the soil, with as little injury as possible; the earth should be gently and gradually removed from the larger roots, as we proceed onward from the extremity of the circle to the centre, and when we reach the nucleus of roots surrounding the trunk, and fairly undermine the whole, we shall find ourselves in possession of a tree in such a perfect condition, that even when of considerable size, we may confidently hope for a speedy recovery of its former luxuriance after being replanted.

Now to remove a tree in this manner, requires not only a considerable degree of experience, which is only to be acquired by practice, but also much patience and perseverance while engaged in the work. It is not a difficult task to remove, in a careless manner, four or five trees in a day, of fifteen feet in height, by the assistance of three or four men, and proper implements of removal, while one or two trees only can be removed if the roots and branches are preserved entire or nearly so. Yet in the latter case, if the work be well performed, we shall have the satisfaction of beholding the subjects, when removed, soon taking fresh root, and becoming vigorous healthy trees, with fine luxuriant heads, while three-fourths of the former will most probably perish, and the remainder struggle for several years, under the loss of so large a portion of their roots and branches, before they entirely recover, and put on the appearance of handsome trees.

When a tree is carelessly transplanted, and the roots much mutilated, the operator feels obliged to reduce the top accordingly; as experience teaches him, that although the leaves may expand, yet they will soon perish without a fresh supply of food from the roots. But when the largest portion of the roots are carefully taken up with the tree, pruning should be less resorted to, and thus the original symmetry and beauty of the head retained. When this is the case, the leaves contribute as much, by their peculiar action in elaborating the sap, towards re-establishing the



FIG. 42. SOCIAL HOUR UNDER THE PAULOWNIA TREE

tree, as the roots; and indeed the two act so reciprocally with each other, that any considerable injury to the one always affects the other. "The functions of respiration, perspiration, and digestion," says Professor Lindley, "which are the particular offices of leaves, are essential to the health of a plant; its healthiness being in proportion to the degree in which these functions are duly performed. The leaf is in reality a natural contrivance for exposing a large surface to the influence of external agents, by whose assistance the crude sap contained in the stem is altered, and rendered suitable to the particular wants of the species, and for returning into the general circulation, the fluids in their matured condition. In a word, the leaf of a plant is its lungs and stomach traversed by a system of veins." \* All the pruning, therefore, that is necessary, when a tree is properly transplanted, will be comprised in paring smooth all bruises or accidental injuries, received by the roots or branches during the operation, or the removal of a few that may interfere with elegance of form in the head.

Next in importance to the requisite care in performing the operation of transplanting, is the proper choice of individual trees to be transplanted. In making selections for removal among our fine forest trees, it should never be forgotten that there are two distinct kinds of subjects, even of the same species of every tree, viz. those that grow among and are surrounded by other trees or woods, and those which grow alone, in free open exposures, where they are acted upon by the winds, storms, and sunshine, at all times and seasons. The former class it will always be exceedingly difficult to transplant successfully even with the greatest care, while the latter may always be removed with comparatively little risk of failure.

Any one who is at all familiar with the growth of trees in woods or groves somewhat dense, is also aware of the great difference in the external appearance between such trees and those which stand singly in open spaces. In thick woods, trees are found to have tall, slender trunks, with

\* Lindley, "Theory of Horticulture."

comparatively few branches except at the top, smooth and thin bark, and they are scantily provided with roots, but especially with the small fibres so essentially necessary to insure the growth of the tree when transplanted. Those, on the other hand, which stand isolated, have short thick stems, numerous branches, thick bark, and great abundance of root and small fibres. The latter, accustomed to the full influence of the weather, to cold winds as well as open sunshine have what Sir Henry Steuart has aptly denominated the "protecting properties," well developed; being robust and hardy, they are well calculated to endure the violence of the removal, while trees growing in the midst of a wood sheltered from the tempests by their fellows, and scarcely ever receiving the sun and air freely except at their topmost branches, are too feeble to withstand the change of situation, when removed to an open lawn, even when they are carefully transplanted.

"Of trees in open exposures," says Sir Henry, "we find that their peculiar properties contribute, in a remarkable manner, to their health and prosperity. In the first place, their shortness and greater girth of stem, in contradistinction to others in the interior of woods, are obviously intended to give the former greater strength to resist the winds, and a shorter lever to act upon the roots. Secondly, their larger heads, with spreading branches, in consequence of the free access of light, are as plainly formed for the nourishment as well as the balancing of so large a trunk, and also for furnishing a cover to shield it from the elements. Thirdly, their superior thickness and induration of bark is, in like manner, bestowed for the protection of the sap-vessels, that lie immediately under it, and which, without such defence from cold, could not perform their functions. Fourthly, their greater number and variety of roots are for the double purpose of nourishment and strength; nourishment to support a mass of such magnitude, and strength to contend with the fury of the blast. Such are the obvious purposes for which the unvarying characteristics of trees in open exposures are conferred upon them. Nor are they

conferred equally and indiscriminately upon all trees so situated. They seem, by the economy of nature, to be peculiar adaptations to the circumstances and wants of each individual, uniformly bestowed in the ratio of exposure, greater where that is more conspicuous, and uniformly decreasing, as it becomes less." \*

Trees in which the protecting properties are well developed are frequently to be met with on the skirts of woods; but those standing singly here and there, through the cultivated fields and meadows of our farm lands, where the roots have extended themselves freely in the mellow soil, are the finest subjects for removal into the lawn, park, or pleasure ground.

The machine used in removing trees of moderate size is of simple construction, consisting of a pair of strong wheels about five feet high, a stout axle, and a pole about twelve feet long. In transplanting, the wheels and axle are brought close to the trunk of the tree, the pole is firmly lashed to the stem, and when the soil is sufficiently removed and loosened about the roots, the pole, with the tree attached, is drawn down to a horizontal position by the aid of men and a pair of horses. When the tree is thus drawn out of the hole, it is well secured and properly balanced upon the machine, the horses are fastened in front of the mass of roots by gearings attached to the axle, and the whole is transported to the destined location.

In order more effectually to insure the growth of large specimens when transplanted, a mode of preparing beforehand a supply of young roots, is practised by skilful operators. This consists in removing the top soil, partially undermining the tree, and shortening back many of the roots; and afterwards replacing the former soil by rich mould, or soil well manured. This is suffered to remain at least one year, and often three or four years; the tree, stimulated by the fresh supply of food, throws out an abundance of small fibres, which render success, when the time for removal arrives, comparatively certain.

\* Steuart, *The Planter's Guide*," p. 105.

It may be well to remark here, that before large trees are transplanted into their final situations, the latter should be well prepared by trenching, or digging the soil two or three feet deep, intermingling throughout the whole a liberal portion of well decomposed manure, or rich compost. To those who are in the habit of planting trees of any size in unprepared grounds, or that merely prepared by digging *one spit deep*, and turning in a little surface manure, it is inconceivable how much more rapid is the growth, and how astonishingly luxuriant the appearance of trees when removed into ground properly prepared. It is not too much to affirm, that young trees under favorable circumstances — in soil so prepared — will advance more rapidly, and attain a larger stature in eight years, than those planted in the ordinary way, without deepening the soil, will in twenty — and trees of larger size in proportion; a gain of growth surely worth the trifling expense incurred in the first instance. And the same observation will apply to all planting. A little extra labor and cost expended in preparing the soil will, for a long time, secure a surprising rapidity of growth.\*

\* Where expense is not so much an object as success, we cannot too deeply impress upon planters the necessity of making very deep, and very wide holes, or pits, as they are called in England. These pits should be four to five feet deep, and not less than ten to sixteen feet in diameter, and neither round nor square, but star-shaped, or cross-shaped, of such a form as would be produced by placing one equilateral triangle upon another, or two parallelograms across each other, so as to form a Greek cross.

The object of departing from the square, or round form, is to introduce the growing fibres of the young trees into the firm and poor soil, by degrees, and not all at once, as in the round or square-hole manner.

When a tree is planted in the round or square pit, surrounded outside of it by poor, hard soil, it is very much in the same situation as if its roots were confined in a tub or box.

The dove-tailing, so to speak, of the prepared soil, and of the moisture it will retain, with the hard, impenetrable soil by which it is surrounded, will gradually prepare the latter for being penetrated by the roots of the trees, and prevent the sides of the pit from giving the same check to those roots, which the sides of the pot or tub do to the plant contained in it. In the preparation of these holes, the lower spot, or hard-pan, should be

In the actual planting of the tree, the chief point lies in bringing every small fibre in contact with the soil, so that no hollows or interstices are left, which may produce mouldiness and decay of the roots. To avoid this, the soil must be pulverized with the spade before filling in, and one of the workmen, with his hands and a flat dibble of wood, should fill up all cavities, and lay out the small roots before covering them in their natural position. When watering is thought advisable (and we practise it almost invariably), it should always be done while the planting is going forward. Poured in the hole when the roots are just covered with the soil, it serves to settle the loose earth compactly around the various roots, and thus both furnishes a supply of moisture, and brings the pulverized mould in proper contact for growth. Trees well watered when planted in this way, will rarely require it afterwards; and should they do so, the better way is to remove two or three inches of the top soil, and give the lower stratum a copious supply; when the water having been absorbed, the surface should again be replaced. There is no practice more mischievous to newly moved trees, than that of pouring water, during hot weather, upon the surface of the ground above the roots. Acted upon by the sun and wind, this surface becomes baked, and but little water reaches the roots; or just sufficient, perhaps, to afford a momentary stimulus, to be followed by increased sensibility to the parching drought.

With respect to the proper seasons for transplanting, we may remark that, except in extreme northern latitude, autumn planting is generally preferred for large, hardy, deciduous trees. It may commence as soon as the leaves fall, and may be continued until winter. In planting large trees in spring, we should commence as early as possible, to give them the benefit of the April rains; if it should be deferred to a later period, the trees will be likely to suffer greatly by the hot summer sun before they are well established.

thrown out, and ten to twelve inches of stone substituted, for the double purpose of drainage, and retention of moisture in dry weather. — H. W. SARGENT.



The transplanting of evergreens is generally considered so much more difficult than that of deciduous trees, and so many persons who have tolerable success in the latter, fail in the former, that we may perhaps be expected to point out the reason of these frequent failures.

Most of our horticultural maxims are derived from English authors and among them, that of always planting evergreens either in August or late in autumn. At both these seasons, it is nearly impossible to succeed in the temperate portions of the United States, from the different character of our climate at these seasons. The genial moisture of the English climate renders transplanting comparatively easy at all seasons, but especially in winter, while in this country, our Augusts are dry and hot, and our winters generally dry and cold. If planted in the latter part of summer, evergreens become parched in their foliage, and soon perish. If planted in autumn or early winter, the severe cold that ensues, to which the newly disturbed plant is peculiarly alive, paralyses vital action, and the tree is so much enfeebled that, when spring arrives, it survives but a short period. The only period, therefore, that remains for the successful removal of evergreens here, is the spring.\* When planted as early as practicable in the spring, so as to have the full benefit of the abundant rains so beneficial to vegetation at that season, they will almost immediately protrude new shoots and regain their former vigor.

Evergreens are, in their roots, much more delicate and impatient of dryness than deciduous trees; and this should be borne in mind while transplanting them. For this reason, experienced planters always choose a wet or misty day for their removal; and, in dry weather, we would always recommend the roots to be kept watered and covered

\* It is surpassing strange that at this point, where Mr. Downing most clearly broke with English practice and most definitely indicated the grounds for the horticultural independence of America, his conclusions should not be sustained by later generations. The most experienced American planters of this day transplant evergreens freely in August, many of them preferring that month; and this procedure is successful even on the dry hot wind-swept central plains. — F. A. W.

from the air by mats during transportation. When proper regard is paid to this point, and to judicious selection of the season, evergreens will not be found more difficult of removal than other trees.

Another mode of transplanting large evergreens, which is very successfully practised among us, is that of removing them with frozen balls of earth in mid-winter. When skilfully performed, it is perhaps the most complete of all modes, and is so different from the common method, that the objection we have just made to winter planting does not apply to this case. The trees to be removed are selected, the situations chosen, and the holes dug, while the ground is yet open in autumn. When the ground is somewhat frozen, the operator proceeds to dig a trench around the tree at some distance, gradually undermining it, and leaving all the principal mass of roots embodied in the ball of earth. The whole ball is then left to freeze pretty thoroughly (generally till snow covers the ground), when a large sled drawn by oxen is brought as near as possible, the ball of earth containing the tree rolled upon it, and the whole is easily transported to the hole previously prepared, where it is placed in the proper position, and as soon as the weather becomes mild, the earth is properly filled in around the ball. A tree, either evergreen or deciduous, may be transplanted in this way, so as scarcely to show, at the return of growth, any ill effects from its change of location.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### *OUR COUNTRY VILLAGES \**

**W**ITHOUT any boasting it may safely be said that the natural features of our common country (as the speakers in Congress call her) are as agreeable and prepossessing as those of any other land, whether merry England, la belle France, or the German fatherland. We have greater lakes, larger rivers, broader and more fertile prairies than the old world can show; and if the Alleghanies are rather dwarfish when compared to the Alps, there are peaks and summits, "castle hills" and volcanoes, in our great backbone range of the Pacific — the Rocky Mountains — which may safely hold up their heads along with Mont Blanc and the Jungfrau.

Providence, then, has blessed this country — our country — with "natural born" features which we may look upon and be glad. But how have we sought to deform the fair landscape here and there by little, miserable shabby-looking towns and villages; not miserable and shabby-looking from the poverty and wretchedness of the inhabitants — for in no land is there more peace and plenty — but miserable and shabby-looking from the absence of taste, symmetry, order, space, proportion, — all that constitutes beauty. Ah, well and truly did Cowper say,

"God made the country, but man made the town."

For in the one we everywhere see utility and beauty harmoniously combined, while the other presents us but too often the reverse, that is to say, the marriage of utility and deformity.

Some of our readers may remind us that we have already

\* Original date of June, 1850.

preached a sermon from this text. No matter; we should be glad to preach fifty; yes, or even establish a sect,— as that seems the only way of making proselytes now, — whose duty it should be to convert people living in the country towns to the true faith; we mean the true rural faith, viz., that it is immoral and uncivilized to live in mean and uncouth villages, where there is no poverty, or want of intelligence in the inhabitants; that there is nothing laudable in having a pianoforte and mahogany chairs in the parlor where the streets outside are barren of shade trees, destitute of sidewalks, and populous with pigs and geese.

We are bound to admit (with a little shame and humiliation, — being a native of New York, the “Empire State”), that there is one part of the Union where the millennium of country towns, and good government and rural taste has not only commenced but is in full domination. We mean, of course, Massachusetts. The traveller may go from one end of that state to the other, and find flourishing villages with broad streets lined with maples and elms, behind which are goodly rows of neat and substantial dwellings, full of evidences of order, comfort and taste. Throughout the whole state no animals are allowed to run at large in the streets of towns and villages. Hence so much more cleanliness than elsewhere; so much more order and neatness; so many more pretty rural lanes; so many inviting flower gardens and orchards, only separated from the passer-by by a low railing or hedge instead of a formidable board fence. Now if you cross the state line into New York — a state of far greater wealth than Massachusetts, as long settled and nearly as populous — you feel directly that you are in the land of “pigs and poultry,” in the least agreeable sense of the word. In passing through villages and towns the truth is still more striking as you go to the south and west; and you feel little or nothing of that sense, of “how pleasant it must be to live here,” which the traveller through Berkshire, or the Connecticut valley, or the pretty villages about Boston, feels moving his heart within him. You are rather inclined to wish there were two new com-

mandments, viz.: thou shalt plant trees, to hide the nakedness of the streets; and thou shalt not keep pigs, except in the back yard! \*

Our more reflective and inquiring readers will naturally ask why is this better condition of things — a condition that denotes better citizens, better laws, and higher civilization — confined almost wholly to Massachusetts? To save them an infinite deal of painstaking, research and investigation, we will tell them in a few words. That state is better educated than the rest. She sees the advantage, morally and socially, of orderly, neat, tasteful villages; in producing better citizens, in causing the laws to be respected in making homes dearer and more sacred, in making domestic life and the enjoyment of property to be more truly and rightly estimated.

And these are the legitimate and natural results of this kind of improvement we so ardently desire in the outward life and appearance of rural towns. If our readers suppose us anxious for the building of good houses, and the planting of street avenues, solely that the country may look more beautiful to the eye and that the taste shall be gratified they do us an injustice. This is only the external sign by which we would have the country's health and beauty known, as we look for the health and beauty of its fair daughters in the presence of the rose on their cheeks. But as the latter only blooms lastingly there when a good constitution is joined with healthful habits of mind and body, so the tasteful appearance which we long for in our country towns we seek as the outward mark of education, moral sentiment, love of home, and refined cultivation, which

\* We believe we must lay this latter sin at the doors of our hard-working emigrants from the Emerald Isle. Wherever they settle, they cling to their ancient fraternity of porkers; and think it "no free country where pigs can't have their liberty." Newburgh is by no means a well-planned village, though scarcely surpassed for scenery; but we believe it may claim the credit of being the only one among all the towns, cities and villages of New York, where pigs and geese have not the freedom of the streets. — A. J. D. This savory footnote has been retained for its remarkable historic interest. — F. A. W.

makes the main difference between Massachusetts and Madagascar.

We have in a former number said something as to the practical manner in which "graceless villages" may be improved. We have urged the force of example in those who set about improving their own property, and shown the influence of even two or three persons in giving an air of civilization and refinement to the streets and suburbs of country towns. There is not a village in America, however badly planned at first or ill-built afterwards, that may not be redeemed in a great measure by the aid of shade trees in the streets and a little shrubbery in the front yards, and it is never too late or too early to project improvements of this kind. Every spring and every autumn should witness a revival of associated efforts on the part of selectmen, trustees of corporations, and persons of means and influence, to adorn and embellish the external conditions of their towns. Those least alive to the result as regards beauty, may be roused as to the effects of increased value given to the property thus improved, and villages thus rendered attractive and desirable as places of residence.

But let us now go a step further than this. In no country, perhaps, are there so many new villages and towns laid out every year as in the United States. Indeed so large is the number that the builders and projectors are fairly at a loss for names, ancient and modern history having been literally worn threadbare by the godfathers, until all association with great heroes and mighty deeds is fairly beggared by this re-christening going on in our new settlements and future towns, as yet only populous to the extent of six houses. And notwithstanding the apparent vastness of our territory, the growth of new towns and new states is so wonderful — fifteen or twenty years giving a population of hundreds of thousands, where all was wilderness before — that the plan and arrangement of new towns ought to be a matter of national importance. And yet, to judge by the manner in which we see the thing done, there has not, in the whole duration of the republic, been a single word said

or a single plan formed calculated to embody past experience, or to assist in any way the laying out of a village or town.\*

We have been the more struck by this fact in observing the efforts of some companies who have lately, upon the Hudson, within some twenty or more miles of New York, undertaken to lay out rural villages with some pretension to taste and comfort, and aim, at least, at combining the advantages of the country with easy railroad access to them.

Our readers most interested in such matters as this (and, taking our principal cities together, it is a pretty large class), will be interested to know what is the beau-ideal of these companies who undertake to buy tracts of land, lay them out in the best manner, and form the most complete and attractive rural villages, in order to tempt those tired of the wayworn life of sidewalks into a neighborhood where, without losing society, they can see the horizon, breathe the fresh air, and walk upon elastic greensward.

Well, the beau-ideal of these newly-planned villages is not down to the zero of dirty lanes and shadeless roadsides; but it rises, we are sorry to say, no higher than streets lined on each side with shade trees and bordered with rows of houses. For the most part those houses — cottages, we presume — are to be built on fifty-foot lots; or if any buyer is not satisfied with that amount of elbow room, he may buy two lots, though certain that his neighbor will still be within twenty feet of his fence. And this is the sum total of the rural beauty, convenience, and comfort, of the latest plan for a rural village in the Union.† The buyer gets nothing more than he has in town save his little patch of

\* Since 1850, when this was written, town planning has become known as an art, a science and a profession, and the many glorious achievements in this field would greatly warm the spirit of Andrew Jackson Downing. Let us believe that in these good works his spirit is still marching on. — F. A. W.

† We say plan, but we do not mean to include in this such villages as Northampton, Brookline, etc., beautiful and tasteful as they are. But they are in Massachusetts! — A. J. D.

back and front yard, a little peep down the street, looking one way at the river, and the other way at the sky. So far from gaining any thing which all inhabitants of a village should gain by the combination, one of these new villagers actually loses; for if he were to go by himself, he would buy land cheaper, and have a fresh landscape of fields and hills around him, instead of houses on all sides, almost as closely placed as in the city, which he has endeavored to fly from.

Now a rural village — newly planned in the suburbs of a great city, and planned, too, specially for those whose circumstances will allow them to own a tasteful cottage in such a village — should present attractions much higher than this. It should aim at something higher than mere rows of houses upon streets crossing each other at right angles, and bordered with shade trees. Any one may find as good shade trees and much better houses in certain streets of the city which he leaves behind him; and if he is to give up fifty conveniences and comforts long enjoyed in town for the mere fact of fresh air he had better take board during the summer months in some snug farmhouse as before.

The indispensable desiderata in rural villages of this kind, are the following: 1st, a large open space, common, or park, situated in the middle of the village, not less than twenty acres, and better, if fifty or more in extent. This should be well planted with groups of trees, and kept as a lawn. The expense of mowing it would be paid by the grass in some cases; and in others, a considerable part of the space might be inclosed with a wire fence and fed by sheep or cows like many of the public parks in England.

This park would be the nucleus or heart of the village, and would give an essentially rural character. Around it should be grouped all the best cottages and residences of the place; and this would be secured by selling no lots fronting upon it of less than one-fourth of an acre in extent. Wide streets, with rows of elms or maples, should diverge from the park on each side, and upon these streets smaller lots,





FIG. 43. COMMUNITY MEETING GROUND—A RIVERSIDE PARK

but not smaller than one hundred feet front, should be sold for smaller cottages.\*

In this way, we would secure to our village a permanent rural character; first, by the possession of a large central space always devoted to park or pleasure ground and always held as joint property and for the common use of the whole village; second, by the imperative arrangement of cottages or dwellings around it, in such a way as to secure in all parts of the village sufficient space, view, circulation of air, and broad, well-planted avenues of shade trees.

After such a village was built, and the central park planted a few years the inhabitants would not be contented with the mere meadow and trees, usually called a park in this country. By submitting to a small annual tax per family, they could turn the whole park, if small, or considerable portions, here and there, if large, into pleasure grounds. In the latter there would be collected, by the combined means of the village, all the rare, hardy shrubs, trees, and plants, usually found in the private grounds of any amateur in America. Beds and masses of ever-blooming roses, sweet-scented climbers, and the richest shrubs, would thus be open to the enjoyment of all during the whole growing season. Those who had neither the means, time, nor inclination, to devote to the culture of private pleasure grounds, could thus enjoy those which belonged to all. Others might prefer to devote their own garden to fruits and vegetables, since the pleasure grounds, which belonged to all, and which all would enjoy, would, by their greater breadth and magnitude, offer beauties and enjoyments which few private gardens can give.†

\* Modern practice has not justified this specification for a 20-acre park at the village center. A small green, common or civic center of one to three acres is thought best, the larger parks being placed at the periphery of the town or at the termini of radiating trolley lines, where special scenery or other attractions justify. — F. A. W.

† At this point also American taste has failed to work out along the lines of Mr. Downing's own likes. The botanical garden or other collection of plants is nowadays favored by few landscape architects, if any, and is as seldom asked for by clients. Public parks in particular,

The next step, after the possession of such public pleasure grounds, would be the social and common enjoyment of them. Upon the well-mown glades of lawn, and beneath the shade of the forest trees, would be formed rustic seats. Little arbors would be placed near, where in midsummer evenings ices would be served to all who wished them. And, little by little, the musical taste of the village (with the help of those good musical folks, the German emigrants) would organize itself into a band, which would occasionally delight the ears of all frequenters of the park with popular airs.

Do we overrate the mental and moral influences of such a common ground of entertainment as this when we say that the inhabitants of such a village, enjoying in this way a common interest in flowers, trees, the fresh air, and sweet music daily, would have something more healthful than the ordinary life of cities, and more refining and elevating than the common gossip of country villages?

"Ah! I see, Mr. Editor, you are a bit of a communist." By no means. On the contrary, we believe, above all things under heaven, in the power and virtue of the individual home. We devote our life and humble efforts to raising its condition. But people must live in towns and villages, and therefore let us raise the condition of towns and villages, and especially of rural towns and villages, by all possible means!

But we are republican; and, shall we confess it, we are a little vexed that as a people generally, we do not see how much in America we lose by not using the advantages of republicanism. We mean now, for refined culture, physical comfort, and the like. Republican education we are now beginning pretty well to understand the value of, and it will not be long before it will be hard to find a native citizen who cannot read and write. And this comes by making every man see what a great moral and intellectual good comes from cheerfully bearing a part in the burden of popu-

are developed either as scenery or as playgrounds, not as museums. This may be only a matter of fashion and not a final expression of national character, but for the present it seems to represent the best taste of America. — F. A. W.

lar education. Let us next take up popular refinement in the arts, manners, social life, and innocent enjoyments, and we shall see what a virtuous and educated republic can really become.

Besides this, it is the proper duty of the state — that is, the people — to do in this way what the reigning power does in a monarchy. If the kings and princes in Germany and the sovereign of England, have made magnificent parks and pleasure gardens and thrown them wide open for the enjoyment of all classes of the people (the latter, after all, having to pay for it), may it not be that our sovereign people will (far more cheaply, as they may) make and support these great and healthful sources of pleasure and refinement for themselves in America? We believe so; and we confidently wait for the time when public parks, public gardens, public galleries, and tasteful villages shall be among the peculiar features of our happy republic.

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## CHAPTER XXXII

### ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF COUNTRY VILLAGES \*

“**I**F you or any man of taste wish to have a fit of the blues let him come to the village of ——. I have just settled here; and all my ideas of rural beauty have been put to flight by what I see around me every day. Old wooden houses out of repair, and looking rickety and dejected; new wooden houses, distressingly lean in their proportions, chalky white in their clapboards, and spinachy green in their blinds. The church is absolutely hideous, — a long box of cardboard, with a huge pepperbox on the top. There is not a tree in the streets; and if it were not for fields of refreshing verdure that surround the place, I should have the ophthalmia as well as the blue-devils. Is there no way of instilling some rudiments of taste into the minds of dwellers in remote country places?”

We beg our correspondent, from whose letter we quote the above paragraph, not to despair. There are always wise and good purposes hidden in the most common events of life; and we have no doubt Providence has sent him to the village of ——, as an apostle of taste, to instil some ideas of beauty and fitness into the minds of its inhabitants.

That the aspect of a large part of our rural villages, out of New England, is distressing to a man of taste is undeniable. Not from want of means; for the inhabitants of these villages are thriving, industrious people, and poverty is very little known there. Not from want of materials; for both nature and the useful arts are ready to give them everything needful, to impart a cheerful, tasteful, and inviting aspect to their homes; but simply from a poverty of

\* Original date of June, 1849.

ideas and a dormant sense of the enjoyment to be derived from orderly, tasteful, and agreeable dwellings and streets, do these villages merit the condemnation of all men of taste and right feeling.

The first duty of an inhabitant of forlorn neighborhoods, like the village of —, is to use all possible influence to have the streets planted with trees. To plant trees costs little trouble or expense to each property holder; and once planted, there is some assurance that, with the aid of time and nature, we can at least cast a graceful veil over the deformity of a country home, if we cannot wholly remodel its features. Indeed a village whose streets are bare of trees ought to be looked upon as in a condition not less pitiable than a community without a schoolmaster, or a teacher of religion; for certain it is, when the affections are so dull, and the domestic virtues so blunt that men do not care how their own homes and villages look, they care very little for fulfilling any moral obligations not made compulsory by the strong arm of the law; while, on the other hand, show us a Massachusetts village, adorned by its avenues of elms, and made tasteful by the affection of its inhabitants and you also place before us the fact, that it is there where order, good character, and virtuous deportment most of all adorn the lives and daily conduct of its people.

Our correspondents who, like the one just quoted, are apostles of taste, must not be discouraged by lukewarmness and opposition on the part of the inhabitants of these graceless villages. They must expect sneers and derision from the ignorant and prejudiced; for, strange to say, poor human nature does not love to be shown that it is ignorant and prejudiced; and men who would think a cowshed good enough to live in, if only their wants were concerned, take pleasure in pronouncing every man a visionary whose ideas rise above the level of their own accustomed vision. But, as an offset to this, it should always be remembered that there are two great principles at the bottom of our national character, which the apostle of taste in the most benighted graceless village may safely count upon. One of these is

the principle of imitation, which will never allow a Yankee to be outdone by his neighbors; and the other, the principle of progress, which will not allow him to stand still when he discovers that his neighbor has really made an improvement.

Begin then by planting the first half-dozen trees in the public streets. "They will grow," as Sir Walter observed, "while you sleep;" and once fairly settled in their new congregation, so that they get the use of their arms, and especially of their tongues, it is quite extraordinary what sermons they will preach to those dull and tasteless villagers. Not a breeze that blows but you will hear these tongues of theirs (which some look upon merely as leaves) whispering the most eloquent appeals to any passer by. There are some doubtless whose auriculars are so obtuse that they do not understand this language of the trees; but let even one of these walk home in a hot July day, when the sun that shines on the American continent has a face brighter than California gold, and if he does not return thanks devoutly for the cool shade of our half dozen trees, as he approaches them and rests beneath their cool boughs, then is he a worse heathen than any piratical Malay of the Indian Ocean. But even such a man is sometimes convinced by an appeal to the only chord that vibrates in the narrow compass of his soul, — that of utility, — when he sees with surprise a fine row of trees in a village stretching out their leafy canopy as a barrier to a destructive fire that otherwise would have crossed the street and burnt down the other half of the best houses in the village.

The next step to improve the graceless village is to persuade some of those who are erecting new buildings to adopt more tasteful models. And by this we mean not necessarily what builders call a "fancy house," decorated with various ornaments that are supposed to give beauty to a cottage; but rather to copy some design, or some other building, where good proportions, pleasing form and fitness for the use intended give the beauty sought for without calling in the aid of ornaments, which may heighten but never create beauty. If you cannot find such a house ready built

to copy from, procure works where such designs exist, or still better, a rough and cheap sketch from a competent architect, as a guide. Persuade your neighbor, who is about to build, that even if his house is to cost but \$600, there is no economy that he can practise in the expenditure of that sum so indisputable or which he will so completely realize the value of afterwards as \$10 or \$20 worth of advice, with a few pen or pencil marks to fix the ideas upon paper, from an architect of acknowledged taste and judgment. Whether the house is to look awkward and ugly or whether it is to be comfortable and pleasing for years all depend upon the idea of that house which previously exists in somebody's mind, — either architect, owner, or mechanic, — whoever in short conceives what that house shall be before it becomes "a local habitation," or has any name among other houses already born in the hitherto graceless village.

It is both surprising and pleasant to one accustomed to watch the development of the human soul to see the gradual but certain effect of building one really good and tasteful house in a graceless village. Just as certain as there is a dormant spark of the love of beauty, which underlies all natures extant, in that village, so certain will it awaken at the sight of that house. You will hear nothing about it; or if you do, perhaps you may, at first, even hear all kinds of facetious comments on Mr. ——'s new house. But next year you will find the old mode abandoned by him who builds a new house. He has a new idea; he strives to make his dwelling manifest it; and this process goes on till by-and-by you wonder what new genius has so changed the aspect of this village and turned its neglected, bare, and lanky streets into avenues of fine foliage, and streets of neat and tasteful houses.

It is an old adage that "a cobbler's family has no shoes." We are forced to call the adage up for an explanation of the curious fact that in five villages out of six in the United States there does not appear to have been room enough in which properly to lay out the streets or place the houses. Why on a continent so broad that the mere public lands



amount to an area of fifty acres for every man, woman, and child in the commonwealth, there should not be found space sufficient to lay out country towns so that the streets shall be wide enough for avenues and the house-lots broad enough to allow sufficient trees and shrubbery to give a little privacy and seclusion, is one of the unexplained phenomena in the natural history of our continent, which, along with the boulders and glaciers, we leave to the learned and ingenious Professor Agassiz. Certain it is our ancestors did not bring over this national trait from England; for in that small, and yet great kingdom, not larger than one of our largest states, there is one city — London — which has more acres devoted to public parks, than can be numbered for this purpose in all America.

It may appear too soon to talk of village greens and village squares or small parks planted with trees and open to the common enjoyment of the inhabitants in the case of graceless villages, where there is yet not a shade-tree standing in one of the streets. But this will come gradually; and all the sooner, just in proportion as the apostles of taste multiply in various parts of the country. Persons interested in these improvements and who are not aware of what has been done in some parts of New England, should immediately visit New Haven and Springfield. The former city is a bower of elms; and the inhabitants who now walk beneath spacious avenues of this finest of American trees speak with gratitude of the energy, public spirit and taste of the late Mr. Hillhouse, who was the great apostle of taste for that city, years ago, when the streets were as bare as those of the most graceless villages in the land. And what stranger has passed through Springfield and not recognized immediately a superior spirit in the place, which long since suggested and planted the pretty little square which now ornaments the town?

But we should be doing injustice to the principle of progress, to which we have already referred, if we did not mention here the signs of the times which we have lately noticed; signs that prove the spirit of rural improvement is fairly

awake over this broad continent. We have received accounts within the last month of the doings of ornamental tree associations lately formed in five different states from New Hampshire to Tennessee. The object of these associations is to do precisely what nobody in particular thinks it his business to do; that is, to rouse the public mind to the importance of embellishing the streets of towns and villages and to induce everybody to plant trees in front of his own premises.

While we are writing this, we have received the printed report of one of these associations, The Rockingham Farmers' Club, of Exeter, New Hampshire. The whole report is so much to the point, that we republish it entire in our Domestic Notices of the month; but there is so much earnest enthusiasm in the first paragraph of the report, and it is so entirely apposite to our present remarks, that we must also introduce it here:

"Why are not the streets of all our villages shaded and adorned with trees? Why are so many of our dwellings still unprotected from the burning heat of summer, and the pelting of the pitiless storms of winter? Is it because in New England hearts, hurried and pressed as they are by care and business, there is no just appreciation of the importance of the subject? Or is it the failure in the attempt, which almost every man has made once in his life, in this way to ornament his home, has led many to the belief that there is some mystery passing the comprehension of common men about this matter of transplanting trees? The answer may be found, we apprehend, partly in each of the reasons suggested. Ask your neighbor why he has not more trees about his home, and he will tell you that they are of no great use, and besides that it is very difficult to make them grow; that he has tried it once or twice and they have all died. Now these, the common reasons, are both ill-founded. It is of use for every man to surround himself with objects of interest, to cultivate a taste for the beautiful in all things, and especially in the works of nature. It is of use for every family to have a home, a pleasant, happy

home, hallowed by purifying influences. It is of use that every child should be educated, not only in sciences, and arts, and dead languages, but that his affections and his taste should be developed and refined; that the book of nature should be laid open to him; and that he should learn to read her language in the flower and the leaf, written everywhere, in the valley and on the hill-side, and hear it in the songs of birds and the murmuring of the forest. If you would keep pure the heart of your child and make his youth innocent and happy, surround him with objects of interest and beauty at home. If you would prevent a restless spirit, if you would save him from that lowest species of idolatry, 'the love of money,' and teach him to 'love what is lovely,' adorn your dwellings, your places of worship, your schoolhouses, your streets and public squares, with trees and hedges, and lawns and flowers, so that his heart may early and ever be impressed with the love of Him who made them all."

What more can we add to this eloquent appeal from the committee of a farmer's club in a village of New Hampshire? Only to entreat other farmers' clubs to go and do likewise; other ornamental tree societies to carry on the good work of adorning the country; other apostles of taste not to be discouraged, but to be unceasing in their efforts, till they see the clouds of ignorance and prejudice dispersing; and, finally, all who live in the country and have an affection for it to take hold of this good work of rural improvement till not a graceless village can be found from the Penobscot to the Rio Grande, or a man of intelligence who is not ashamed to be found living in such a village.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### *SHADE-TREES IN CITIES \**

**D**OWN with the ailanthus!" is the cry we hear on all sides, town and country, now that this "tree of heaven" (as the catalogues used alluringly to call it) has penetrated all parts of the Union, and begins to show its true character. Down with the ailanthus! "Its blossoms smell so disagreeably that my family are made ill by it," says an old resident on one of the squares in New York, where it is the only shade for fifty contiguous houses. "We must positively go to Newport, papa, to escape these horrible ailanthuses," exclaim numberless young ladies, who find that even their best Jean Maria Farina affords no permanent relief since their front parlors have become so celestially embowered. "The vile tree comes up all over my garden," say fifty owners of surburban lots who have foolishly been tempted into bordering the outside of their "yards" with it, having been told that it grows so "surprising fast." "It has ruined my lawn for fifty feet all round each tree," says the country gentlemen, who, seduced by the oriental beauty of its foliage, have also been busy for years dotting it in open places here and there in their pleasure grounds. In some of the cities southward, the authorities, taking the matter more seriously, have voted the entire downfall of the whole species, and the Herods who wield the besom of

\* Original date of August, 1852.

The subject of shade trees, and especially their use in villages, was very dear to Mr. Downing's heart and he wrote of it frequently and copiously. It is fair to believe that his preaching had its effect, for the result, speaking in general terms, has gone in the direction he wished. American cities and towns have done much better of late years, though hundreds of them still have far to go. — F. A. W.

sylvan destruction, have probably made a clean sweep of the first born of celestials, in more towns than one south of Mason and Dixon's line this season.

Although we think there is picturesqueness in the free and luxuriant foliage of the ailanthus, we shall see its downfall without a word to save it. We look upon it as an usurper in rather bad *odor* at home, which has come over to this land of liberty, under the garb of utility,\* to make foul the air with its pestilent breath and devour the soil with its intermeddling roots — a tree that has the fair outside and the treacherous heart of the Asiatics, and that has played us so many tricks that we find we have caught a Tartar which it requires something more than a Chinese wall to confine within its limits.

Down with the ailanthus! therefore, we cry with the populace. But we have reasons besides theirs, and now that the favorite has fallen out of favor with the sovereigns we may take the opportunity to preach a funeral sermon over its remains that shall not, like so many funeral sermons, be a bath of oblivion-waters to wash out all memory of its vices. For if the Tartar is not laid violent hands upon and kept under close watch even after the spirit has gone out of the old trunk and the coroner is satisfied that he has come to a violent end — lo, we shall have him upon us tenfold in the shape of suckers innumerable — little Tartars that will beget a new dynasty and overrun our grounds and gardens again without mercy.

The vices of the ailanthus — the incurable vices of the by-gone favorite — then, are twofold. In the first place, it smells horribly, both in leaf and flower, and instead of sweetening and purifying the air, fills it with a heavy, sickening odor;† in the second place, it suckers abominably, and

\* The ailanthus, though originally from China, was first introduced into this country from Europe, as the "Tanner's sumac" — but the mistake was soon discovered, and its rapid growth made it a favorite with planters. — A. J. D.

† Two acquaintances of ours, in a house in the upper part of the city of New York, are regularly driven out by the ailanthus malaria every season. — A. J. D.

thereby overruns, appropriates, and reduces to beggary all the soil of every open piece of ground where it is planted. These are the mortifications which everybody feels sooner or later who has been seduced by the luxuriant outstretched welcome of its smooth round arms, and the waving and beckoning of its graceful plumes, into giving it a place in their home circle. For a few years, while the tree is growing, it has, to be sure, a fair and specious look. You feel almost, as you look at its round trunk shooting up as straight and almost as fast as a rocket, crowned by such a luxuriant tuft of verdure, that you have got a young palm tree before your door, that can whisper tales to you in the evening of that "Flowery Country" from whence you have borrowed it, and you swear to stand by it against all slanderous aspersions. But alas! you are greener in your experience than the Tartar in his leaves. A few years pass by; the sapling becomes a tree, its blossoms fill the air with something that looks like curry-powder, and smells like the plague. You shut down the windows to keep out the unbalmy June air if you live in town, and invariably give a wide berth to the heavenly avenue if you belong to the country.

But we confess openly that our crowning objection to this petted Chinaman or Tartar who has played us so falsely is a patriotic objection. It is that he has drawn away our attention from our own more noble native American trees to waste it on this miserable pigtail of an Indiaman. What should we think of the Italians, if they should forswear their own orange trees and figs, pomegranates and citrons, and plant their streets and gardens with the poison sumac-tree of our swamps? And what must a European arboriculturist think, who travels in America, delighted and astonished at the beauty of our varied and exhaustless forests — the richest in the temperate zone — to see that we neither value nor plant them, but fill our lawns and avenues with the cast-off nuisances of the gardens of Asia and Europe?

And while in the vein, we would include in the same category another less fashionable, but still much petted foreigner, that has settled among us with a good letter of

credit, but who deserves not his success. We mean the abele or silver poplar. There is a pleasant flutter in his silver-lined leaves, but when the timber is a foot thick you shall find the air unpleasantly filled every spring with the fine white down which flies from the blossom, while the suckers which are thrown up from the roots of the mature trees are a pest to all grounds and gardens, even worse than those of the ailanthus. Down with the abeles!

Oh! that our tree-planters, and they are an army of hundreds of thousands in this country, ever increasing with the growth of good taste — oh! that they knew and could understand the surpassing beauty of our native shade trees. More than forty species of oak are there in North America (Great Britain has only two species — France only five), and we are richer in maples, elms, and ashes, than any country in the old world. Tulip trees and magnolias from America are the exotic glories of the princely grounds of Europe. But (saving always the praiseworthy partiality in New England for our elms and maples), who plants an American tree — in America? And who, on the contrary, that has planted shade trees at all in the United States for the last fifteen years has not planted either ailanthuses or abele poplars? We should like to see that discreet, sagacious individual, who has escaped the national ecstasy for foreign suckers. If he can be found, he is more deserving a gold medal from our horticultural societies, than the grower of the most mammoth pumpkin or elephantine beet that will garnish the cornucopia of Pomona for 1852.

In this confession of our sins of commission in planting filthy suckers, and omission in not planting clean natives, we must lay part of the burden at the door of the nurserymen.\* (It has been found a convenient practice — this shifting the responsibility — ever since the first trouble about trees in the Garden of Eden.)

“Well! then, if the nurserymen will raise ailanthuses and abeles by the thousands,” reply the planting community,

\* It need not be forgotten that Mr. Downing was himself a nurseryman. — F. A. W.

"and telling us nothing about pestilential odors and suckers, tell us a great deal about 'rapid growth, immediate effect — beauty of foliage — rare foreign trees,' and the like, it is not surprising that we plant what turn out, after twenty years' trial, to be nuisances instead of embellishments. It is the business of the nurserymen to supply planters with the best trees. If they supply us with the worst, who sins the most, the buyer or the seller of such stuff?"

Softly, good friends. It is the business of the nurserymen to make a profit by raising trees. If you will pay just as much for a poor tree, that can be raised in two years from a sucker as for a valuable tree that requires four or five years, do you wonder that the nurserymen will raise and sell you ailanthuses instead of oaks? It is the business (duty, at least) of the planter to know what he is about to plant; and though there are many honest traders, it is a good maxim that the Turks have — "Ask no one in the bazaar to praise his own goods." To the eyes of the nurserymen a crop of ailanthuses and abeles is "a pasture in the valley of sweet waters." But go to an old homestead where they have become naturalized and you will find that there is a bitter aftertaste about the experience of the unfortunate possessor of these sylvan treasures of a far-off country.\*

The planting intelligence must therefore increase if we would fill our grounds and shade our streets with really valuable ornamental trees. The nurserymen will naturally raise what is in demand, and if but ten customers offer in five years for the overcup oak, while fifty come of a day for the ailanthus, the latter will be cultivated as a matter of course.

The question immediately arises, what shall we use instead of the condemned trees? What, especially, shall we

\* We may as well add for the benefit of the novice, the advice to shun all trees that are universally propagated by suckers. It is a worse inheritance for a tree than drunkenness for a child, and more difficult to eradicate. Even ailanthuses and poplars from seed have tolerably respectable habits as regards radical things. — A. J. D.



use in the streets of cities? Many — nay, the majority of shade trees — clean and beautiful in the country — are so infested with worms and insects in towns as to be worse than useless. The sycamore has failed, the linden is devoured, the elm is preyed upon by insects. We have rushed into the arms of the Tartar, partly out of fright, to escape the armies of caterpillars and cankerworms that have taken possession of better trees!

Take refuge, friends, in the American maples. Clean, sweet, cool, and umbrageous, are the maples; and, much vaunted as ailanthuses and poplars are, for their lightning growth, take our word for it, that it is only a good go-off at the start. A maple at twenty years, or even at ten, if the soil is favorable, will be much the finer and larger tree. No tree transplants more readily, none adapts itself more easily to the soil, than the maple. For light soils and the milder parts of the Union, say the Middle and Western States, the silver maple, with drooping branches, is at once the best and most graceful of street trees. For the North and East, the soft maple and the sugar maple.\* If any one wishes to know the glory and beauty of the sugar maple as a street tree, let him make a pilgrimage to Stockbridge, in Massachusetts! If he desires to study the silver maple there is no better school than Burlington, New Jersey. These are two towns almost wholly planted with these American trees, of the sylvan adornings of which any “native” may well be proud. The inhabitants neither have to abandon their front rooms from the smell nor lose the use of their back yards by the suckers. And whoever plants either of these three maples may feel sure that he is earning the thanks instead of the reproaches of posterity.

The most beautiful and stately of all trees for an avenue — and especially for an avenue street in town — is an American tree that one rarely sees planted in America † — never, that we remember, in any public street. We mean

\* By the soft maple is probably meant the red maple. — F. A. W.

† Though there are grand avenues of it in the royal parks of Germany — raised from American seed. — A. J. D.

the tulip tree, or *liriodendron*. What can be more beautiful than its trunk, finely proportioned, and smooth as a Grecian column? What more artistic than its leaf, cut like an arabesque in a Moorish palace? What more clean and lustrous than its tufts of foliage, dark green and rich as deepest emerald? What more lily-like and specious than its blossoms, golden and bronze shaded? and what fairer and more queenly than its whole figure, stately and regal as that of *Zenobia*? For a park tree, to spread on every side, it is unrivalled, growing a hundred and thirty feet high, and spreading into the finest symmetry of outline.\* For a street tree, its columnar stem, beautiful either with or without branches — with a low head or a high head — foliage over the second story or under it — is precisely what is most needed. A very spreading tree, like the elm, is always somewhat out of place in town, because its natural habit is to extend itself laterally. A tree with the habit of the tulip, lifts itself into the finest pyramids of foliage, exactly suited to the usual width of town streets, and thus embellishes and shades without darkening and incumbering them. Besides this, the foliage of the tulip tree is as clean and fresh at all times as the bonnet of a fair young quakeress, and no insect mars the purity of its rich foliage.

We know very well that the tulip tree is considered difficult to transplant. It is, the gardeners will tell you, much easier to plant *ailanthuses*, or, if you prefer, maples. Exactly, so it is easier to walk than to dance; but as all people who wish to be graceful in their gait learn to dance (if they can get an opportunity), so all planters who wish a peculiarly elegant tree will learn how to plant the *liriodendron*. In the first place the soil must be light and rich — better than is at all necessary for the maples — and if it cannot be made light and rich, then the planter must confine himself to maples. Next, the tree must be transplanted just about the time of commencing its growth in the spring, and

\* At Wakefield, the fine country-seat of the Fisher family, near Philadelphia, are several tulip-trees on the lawn, over one hundred feet high, and three to six feet in diameter. — A. J. D.

the roots must be cut as little as possible, and not suffered to get dry till replanted.

There is one point which, if attended to as it is in nurseries abroad, would render the tulip tree as easily transplanted as a maple or a poplar. We mean the practice of cutting round the tree every year in the nursery till it is removed. This develops a ball of fibres, and so prepares the tree for the removal that it feels no shock at all.\* Nurserymen could well afford to grow tulip trees to the size suitable for street planting and have them twice cut or removed beforehand, so as to enable them to warrant their growth in any good soil, for a dollar apiece. (And we believe the average price at which the thousands of noisome ailanthuses that now infest our streets have been sold, is above a dollar.) No buyer pays so much and so willingly, as the citizen who has only one lot front, and five dollars each has been no uncommon price in New York for "trees of heaven."

After our nurserymen have practised awhile this preparation of the tulip trees for the streets by previous removals, they will gradually find a demand for the finer oaks, beeches, and other trees now considered difficult to transplant for the same cause, and about which there is no difficulty at all if this precaution is taken. Any body can catch suckers in a still pond, but a trout must be tickled with dainty bait. Yet true sportsmen do not for this reason, prefer angling with worms about the margin of stagnant pools when they can whip the gold-spangled beauties out of swift streams with a little skill and preparation, and we trust that in future no true lover of trees will plant suckers to torment his future days and sight, when he may, with a little more pains, have the satisfaction of enjoying the shade of the freshest and comeliest of American forest trees.†

\* In many continental nurseries, this annual preparation in the nursery, takes place until fruit trees of bearing size can be removed without the slightest injury to the crop of the same year. — A. J. D. The same method is now extensively practiced with shade trees in American nurseries. — F. A. W.

† It seems unkind to criticise Mr. Downing's choice of trees, but modern experience does not fully bear him out. The tulip tree, which he praises

so highly, has not proved at all satisfactory for street planting. Neither has the white pine and some of the other trees which he favored. At the same time it appears that the despised ailanthus still holds those crowded city streets where, for reeking coal smoke and other untoward conditions, no other tree will grow. — F. A. W.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### *TREES IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES \**

**T**HE man who loves not trees, to look at them, to lie under them, to climb up them (once more a school-boy), would make no bones of murdering Mrs. Jeffs. In what one imaginable attribute that it ought to possess is a tree deficient? Light, shade, shelter, coolness, freshness, music, all the colors of the rainbow, dew and dreams dropping through their soft twilight, at eve and morn, — dropping direct, soft, sweet, soothing, restorative from heaven. Without trees, how, in the name of wonder, could we have had houses, ships, bridges, easy chairs, or coffins, or almost any single one of the necessities, comforts, or conveniences of life? Without trees, one might have been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, but not another with a wooden ladle.”

Every man, who has in his nature a spark of sympathy with the good and beautiful, must involuntarily respond to this rhapsody of Christopher North’s in behalf of trees — the noblest and proudest drapery that sets off the figure of our fair planet. Every man’s better sentiments would involuntarily lead him to cherish, respect, and admire trees. And no one who has sense enough rightly to understand the wonderful system of life, order, and harmony, that is involved in one of our grand and majestic forest trees, could ever destroy it unnecessarily without a painful feeling, we should say, akin at least to murder in the fourth degree.

Yet it must be confessed that it is surprising when, from the force of circumstances what the phrenologists call the principle of destructiveness gets excited, how sadly men’s better feelings are warped and smothered. Thus old sol-

\* Original date of March, 1847.



FIG. 44. YOUNG AMERICAN ELMS AS STREET TREES

diers sweep away ranks of men with as little compunction as the mower swings his harmless scythe in a meadow; and settlers, pioneers, and squatters, girdle and make a clearing in a centennial forest, perhaps one of the grandest that ever God planted, with no more remorse than we have in brushing away dusty cobwebs. We are not now about to declaim against war, as a member of the peace society, or against planting colonies and extending the human family, as would a disciple of Dr. Malthus. These are probably both wise means of progress in the hands of the Great Worker.

But it is properly our business to bring men back to their better feelings when the fever of destruction is over. If our ancestors found it wise and necessary to cut down vast forests, it is all the more needful that their descendants should plant trees. We shall do our part, therefore, towards awakening again that natural love of trees which this long warfare against them — this continual laying the axe at their roots — so common in a new country, has in so many places well nigh extinguished. We ought not to cease till every man feels it to be one of his moral duties to become a planter of trees; until every one feels, indeed, that, if it is the most patriotic thing that can be done to make the earth yield two blades of grass instead of one, it is far more so to cause trees to grow where no foliage has waved and fluttered before — trees, which are not only full of usefulness and beauty always, but to which old Time himself grants longer leases than he does to ourselves; so that he who plants them wisely, is more certain of receiving the thanks of posterity than the most persuasive orator or the most prolific writer of his day and generation.

The especial theme of our lamentation touching trees at the present moment is the general neglect and inattention to their many charms, in country towns and villages. We say general, for our mind dwells with unfeigned delight upon exceptions — many beautiful towns and villages in New England, where the verdure of the loveliest elms waves like grand lines of giant and graceful plumes above the

house tops, giving an air of rural beauty that speaks louder for the good habits of the inhabitants than the pleasant sound of a hundred church bells. We remember Northampton, Springfield, New Haven, Stockbridge, and others, whose long and pleasant avenues are refreshing and beautiful to look upon. We do not forget that large and sylvan park, with undulating surface, the Boston Common, or that really admirable city arboretum of rare trees, Washington Square of Philadelphia. Their groves are as beloved and sacred in our eyes as those of the Deo-dar are to the devout Brahmins.

But these are, we are sorry to be obliged to say, only the exceptions to the average condition of our country towns. As an offset to them, how many towns, how many villages, could we name, where rude and uncouth streets bask in the summer heat, and revel in the noontide glare, with scarcely a leaf to shelter or break the painful monotony! Towns and villages, where there is no lack of trade, no apparent want of means, where houses are yearly built, and children weekly born, but where you might imagine, from their barrenness, that the soil had been cursed and had refused to support the life of a single tree.

What must be done in such cases? There must be at least one right-feeling man in every such Sodom. Let him set vigorously at work, and if he cannot induce his neighbors to join him, he must not be disheartened — let him plant and cherish carefully a few trees, if only half a dozen. They must be such as will grow vigorously, and like the native elm, soon make themselves felt and seen wherever they may be placed. In a very few years they will preach more eloquent orations than gray goose quills can write. Their luxuriant leafy arms, swaying and waving to and fro, will make more convincing gestures than any member of congress or stump speaker; and if there is any love of nature dormant in the dusty hearts of the villagers, we prophesy that in a very short time there will be such a general yearning after green trees that the whole place will become a bower of freshness and verdure.



In some parts of Germany the government makes it a duty for every landholder to plant trees in the highways before his property; and in a few towns that we have heard of no young bachelor can take a wife till he has planted a tree. We have not a word to say against either of these regulations. But Americans, it must be confessed, do not like to be over-governed, or compelled into doing even beautiful things. We therefore recommend as an example to all country towns that most praiseworthy and successful mode of achieving this result adopted by the citizens of Northampton, Massachusetts.

This, as we learn, is no less than an Ornamental Tree Society, an association whose business and pleasure it is to turn dusty lanes and bald highways into alleys and avenues of coolness and verdure. Making a "wilderness blossom like the rose," is scarcely more of a miracle than may be wrought by this simple means. It is quite incredible how much spirit such a society, composed at first of a few really zealous arboriculturists, may beget in a country neighborhood. Some men there are in every such place who are too much occupied with what they consider more important matters ever to plant a single tree unsolicited. But these are readily acted upon by a society which works for the public good and which moves an individual of this kind much as a town meeting moves him, by the greater weight of numbers. Others there are who can only be led into tasteful improvement by the principle of imitation, and who consequently will not begin to plant trees till it is the fashion to do so. And again others who grudge the trifling cost of putting out a shade tree, but who will be shamed into it by the example of every neighbor around them — neighbors who have been stimulated into action by the zeal of the society. And last of all, as we have learned, there is here and there an instance of some slovenly and dogged farmer who positively refuses to take the trouble to plant a single twig by the roadside. Such an individual the society commiserate and beg him to let them plant the trees in front of his estate at their own cost.

In this way, little by little, the Ornamental Tree Society accomplishes its ends. In a few years it has the satisfaction of seeing its village the pride of the citizens — for even those who were the most tardy to catch the planting fever, are at last — such is the silent and irresistible influence of sylvan beauty — the loudest champions of green trees — and the delight of all travellers, who treasure it up in their hearts as one does a picture drawn by poets and colored by the light of some divine genius.

We heartily commend, therefore, this plan of Social Planting Reform to every desolate, leafless, and repulsive town and village in the country. There can scarcely be one where there are not three persons of taste and spirit enough to organize such a society; and once fairly in operation, its members will never cease to congratulate themselves on the beauty and comfort they have produced. Every tree which they plant, and which grows up in after years into a giant trunk and grand canopy of foliage, will be a better monument (though it may bear no lying inscription) than many an unmeaning obelisk of marble or granite.

Let us add a few words respecting the best trees for adorning the streets of rural towns and villages. With the great number and variety of fine trees which flourish in this country there is abundant reason for asking, "where shall we choose?" And although we must not allow ourselves space at this moment to dwell upon the subject in detail we may venture two or three hints about it.

Nothing appears to be so captivating to the mass of human beings as *novelty*. And there is a fashion in trees which sometimes has a sway no less rigorous than that of a Parisian modiste. Hence while we have the finest indigenous ornamental trees in the world growing in our native forests, it is not an unusual thing to see them blindly overlooked for foreign species that have not half the real charms and not a tenth part of the adaptation to our soil and climate.

Thirty years ago there was a general Lombardy poplar epidemic. This tall and formal tree, striking and admirable

enough, if very sparingly introduced in landscape planting, is, of all others, most abominable in its serried stiffness and monotony when planted in avenues or straight lines. Yet nine-tenths of all the ornamental planting of that period was made up of this now decrepit and condemned tree.

So too, we recall one or two of our villages where the soil would have produced any of our finest forest trees, yet where the only trees thought worthy of attention by the inhabitants are the ailanthus and the paper mulberry.

The principle which would govern us if we were planting the streets of rural towns is this: *Select the finest indigenous tree or trees, such as the soil and climate of the place will bring to the highest perfection.* Thus if it were a neighborhood where the elm flourished peculiarly well, or the maple, or the beech, we would directly adopt the tree indicated. We would then, in time, succeed in producing the finest possible specimens of the species selected: while, if we adopted, for the sake of fashion or novelty, a foreign tree, we should probably only succeed in getting poor and meagre specimens.

It is because this principle has been, perhaps accidentally, pursued, that the villages of New England are so celebrated for their sylvan charms. The elm is, we think, nowhere seen in more majesty, greater luxuriance, or richer beauty, than in the valley of the Connecticut; and it is because the soil is so truly congenial to it, that the elm-adorned streets of the villages there elicit so much admiration. They are not only well planted with trees, but with a kind of tree which attains its greatest perfection there. Who can forget the fine lines of the sugar-maple in Stockbridge, Massachusetts? They are in our eyes the rural glory of the place. The soil there is their own, and they have attained a beautiful symmetry and development. Yet if, instead of maples, poplars or willows had been planted, how marked would have been the difference of effect.

There are no grander or more superb trees than our American oaks. Those who know them only as they grow in the midst, or on the skirts of a thick forest, have no proper notion of their dignity and beauty when planted and

grown in an avenue, or where they have full space to develop. Now there are many districts where the native luxuriance of the oak woods points out the perfect adaptation of the soil for this tree. If we mistake not, such is the case where that charming rural town in this state, Canandaigua, stands. Yet we confess we were not a little pained in walking through the streets of Canandaigua the past season to find them mainly lined with that comparatively meagre tree, the locust. How much finer and more imposing, for the long principal street of Canandaigua, would be an avenue of our finest and hardiest native oaks, rich in foliage and grand in every part of their trunks and branches.\*

Though we think our native elm or sugar maple and two or three of our oaks the finest of street trees for country villages, yet there are a great many others which may be adopted, when the soil is their own, with the happiest effect. What could well be more beautiful, for example, for a village with a deep, mellow soil, than a long avenue of that tall and most elegant tree, the tulip-tree or whitewood? For a village in a mountainous district, like New Lebanon, in this state, we would perhaps choose the white pine, which would produce a grand and striking effect. In Ohio, the cucumber-tree would make one of the noblest and most admirable avenues, and at the south what could be conceived more captivating than a village whose streets were lined with rows of *Magnolia grandiflora*? We know how little common minds appreciate these natural treasures; how much the less because they are common in the woods about them. Still, such are the trees which should be planted; for fine forest trees are fast disappearing, and planted trees, grown in a soil fully congenial to them, will, as we have already said, assume a character of beauty and grandeur that will arrest the attention and elicit the admiration of every traveller.

\* The oak is easily transplanted from the nurseries, though not from the woods, unless in the latter case, it has been prepared a year beforehand by shortening the roots and branches. — A. J. D. The oaks are nowadays being very successfully used in street planting throughout the eastern and southern states. — F. A. W.

The variety of trees for cities — densely crowded cities — is but small; and this chiefly because the warm brick walls are such hiding-places and nurseries for insects that many fine trees — fine for the country and for rural towns — become absolute pests in the cities. Thus, in Philadelphia, we have seen, with regret, whole rows of the European linden cut down within the last ten years, because this tree, in cities, is so infested with odious worms that it often becomes unendurable. On this account that foreign tree, the ailanthus, the strong scented foliage of which no insect will attack, is every day becoming a greater metropolitan favorite. The maples are among the thriftiest and most acceptable trees for large cities, and no one of them is more vigorous, cleaner, hardier, or more graceful than the silver maple.

We must defer any further remarks for the present; but we must add, in conclusion, that the planting season is at hand. Let every man, whose soul is not a desert, plant trees; and that not alone for himself, within the bounds of his own demesne, but in the streets, and along the rural highways of his neighborhood. Thus he will not only lend grace and beauty to the neighborhood and county in which he lives, but earn, honestly and well, the thanks of his fellowmen.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### *ON PLANTING SHADE TREES* \*

**N**OW that the season of the present is nearly over; now that spring with its freshness of promise, summer with its luxury of development, and autumn with its fulfilment of fruitfulness, have all laid their joys and benefits at our feet, we naturally pause for a moment to see what is to be done in the rural plans of the future.

The planting season is at hand. Our correspondence with all parts of the country informs us that at no previous time has the improvement of private grounds been so active as at present. New and tasteful residences are everywhere being built. New gardens are being laid out. New orchards of large extent are rapidly being planted. In short, the horticultural zeal of the country is not only awake — it is brimful of energy and activity.

Private enterprise being thus in a fair way to take care of itself, we feel that the most obvious duty is to endeavor to arouse a corresponding spirit in certain rural improvements of a more public nature.

We therefore return again to a subject which we dwelt upon at some length last spring — the planting of shade-trees in the streets of our rural towns and villages.

Pleasure and profit are certain sooner or later to awaken a large portion of our countrymen to the advantages of improving their own private grounds. But we find that it is only under two conditions that many public improvements are carried on. The first is, when nearly the whole of the population enjoy the advantages of education, as in New England. The second is, when a few of the more spirited and intelligent of the citizens move the rest by taking the

\* Original date of November, 1847.

burden in the beginning upon their own shoulders by setting the example themselves, and by most zealously urging all others to follow.

The villages of New England, looking at their sylvan charms, are as beautiful as any in the world. Their architecture is simple and unpretending — often, indeed, meagre and unworthy of notice. The houses are surrounded by inclosures full of trees and shrubs, with space enough to afford comfort, and ornament enough to denote taste. But the main street of the village is an avenue of elms, positively delightful to behold. Always wide, the overarching boughs form an aisle more grand and beautiful than that of any old Gothic cathedral. Not content, indeed, with one avenue, some of these villages have, in their wide, single street, three lines of trees, forming a double avenue, of which any grand old palace abroad might well be proud. Would that those of our readers whose souls are callous to the charms of the lights and shadows that bedeck these bewitching rural towns and villages, would forthwith set out on a pilgrimage to such places as Northampton, Springfield, New Haven, Pittsfield, Stockbridge, Woodbury, and the like.

When we contrast with these lovely resting places for the eye, embowered with avenues of elms, gracefully drooping like fountains of falling water, or sugar maples swelling and towering up like finely formed antique vases, some of the uncared for towns and villages in our own state, we are almost forced to believe that the famous common schools of New England teach the æsthetics of art, and that the beauty of shade trees is the care of especial professorships. Homer and Virgil, Cicero, Manilus, and Tully, shades of the great Greeks and Romans! — our citizens have named towns after you, but the places that bear your names scarcely hold leafy trees enough to renew the fading laurels round your heads! — while the direct descendants of stern Puritans, who had a holy horror of things ornamental, who cropped their hair, and made penalties for indulgences in fine linen, live in villages overshadowed by the very spirit of rural elegance!

It is neither from a want of means, or want of time, or any ignorance of what is essential to the beauty of body or of mind, that we see this neglect of the public becomingness. There are numbers of houses in all these villages, that boast their pianos, while the last Paris fashions are worn in the parlors, and the freshest periodical literature of



FIG. 45. GOOD SHADE TREES ON HOME GROUNDS

both sides of the Atlantic fills the centre-tables. But while the comfort and good looks of the individual are sufficiently cared for, the comfort and good looks of the town are sadly neglected. Our education here stops short of New England. We are slow to feel that the character of the inhabitants is always, in some degree, indicated by the appearance of the



town. It is, unluckily, no one's especial business to ornament the streets. No one feels it a reproach to himself, that verdure and beauty do not hang like rich curtains over the street in which he lives. And thus a whole village or town goes on from year to year, in a shameless state of public nudity and neglect, because no one feels it his particular duty to persuade his neighbors to join in making the town in which he lives a gem of rural beauty, instead of a sorry collection of uninteresting houses.\*

It is the frequent apology of intelligent persons who live in such places, and are more alive to this glaring defect than the majority, that it is impossible for them to do anything alone, and their neighbors care nothing about it.

One of the finest refutations of this kind of delusion exists in New Haven. All over the Union, this town is known as the "City of Elms." The stranger always pauses, and bears tribute to the taste of its inhabitants, while he walks beneath the grateful shade of its lofty rows of trees. Yet a large part of the finest of these trees were planted, and the whole of the spirit which they have inspired, was awakened by one person — Mr. Hillhouse. He lived long enough to see fair and lofty aisles of verdure, where, before, were only rows of brick or wooden houses; and, we doubt not, he enjoyed a purer satisfaction than many great conquerors who have died with the honors of capturing kingdoms, and demolishing a hundred cities.†

Let no person, therefore, delay planting shade trees himself, or persuading his neighbors to do the same. Wherever a village contains half a dozen persons zealous in this excellent work of adorning the country at large, let them form a society and make proselytes of those who are slow to be moved otherwise. A public spirited man in Boston does a great service to the community and earns the thanks of his

\* We now have these duties delegated, in many cities and towns, to tree wardens, city foresters, park superintendents, town planning boards or other responsible — and sometimes competent — persons. — F. A. W.

† It is a matter of general regret that the famous New Haven green should have lost its elms in recent years. It will be many a long summer before that remarkable town common resumes its former glory. — F. A. W.

countrymen by giving fifty thousand dollars to endow a professorship in a college; let the public spirited man of the more humble village in the interior also establish his claim to public gratitude by planting fifty trees annually along its public streets in quarters where there is the least ability or the least taste to be awakened in this way, or where the poverty of the houses most needs something to hide them, and give an aspect of shelter and beauty. Hundreds of public meetings are called, on subjects not half so important to the welfare of the place as this, whose object would be to direct the attention of all the householders to the nakedness of their estates, in the eyes of those who most love our country, and would see her rural towns and village homes made as attractive and pleasant as they are free and prosperous.

We pointed out in a former article the principle that should guide those who are about to select trees for streets of rural towns — that of choosing that tree which the soil of the place will bring to the highest perfection. There are two trees, however, which are so eminently adapted to this purpose in the Northern States, that they may be universally employed. These are the American weeping elm and the silver maple. They have, to recommend them, in the first place, great rapidity of growth; in the second place, the graceful forms which they assume; in the third place, abundance of fine foliage; and lastly, the capacity of adapting themselves to almost every soil where trees will thrive at all.\*

These two trees have broad and spreading heads, fit for wide streets and avenues. That fine tree, the Dutch elm,† of exceedingly rapid growth and thick dark green foliage, makes a narrower and more upright head than our native sort, and, as well as the sugar maple, may be planted in

\* The weeping elm has not fulfilled Mr. Downing's expectations; the silver maple has more than done so. It is now planted by hundreds of thousands along the streets of middle western cities and towns. — F. A. W.

† The Dutch elm has almost disappeared from American nurseries and from American landscape practice, but it is still a good sort of tree. — F. A. W.

streets and avenues, where there is but little room for the expansion of wide spreading tops.

No town where any of these trees are extensively planted can be otherwise than agreeable to the eye, whatever may be its situation or the style of its dwellings. To villages prettily built they will give a character of positive beauty that will both add to the value of property and increase the comfort and patriotism of the inhabitants.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### *HOW TO POPULARIZE THE TASTE FOR PLANTING \**

**H**OW to popularize that taste for rural beauty which gives to every beloved home in the country its greatest outward charm and to the country itself its highest attraction is a question which must often occur to many of our readers. A traveller never journeys through England without lavishing all the epithets of admiration on the rural beauty of that gardenesque country; and his praises are as justly due to the wayside cottages of the humble laborers (whose pecuniary condition of life is far below that of our numerous small householders) as to the great palaces and villas. Perhaps the loveliest and most fascinating of the cottage homes, of which Mrs. Hemans has so touchingly sung, are the clergymen's dwellings in that country; dwellings, for the most part, of very moderate size, and no greater cost than are common in all the most thriving and populous parts of the Union, but which, owing to the love of horticulture and the taste for something above the merely useful which characterizes their owners as a class, are for the most part radiant with the bloom and embellishment of the loveliest flowers and shrubs.

The contrast with the comparatively naked and neglected country dwellings that are the average rural tenements of our country at large is very striking. Undoubtedly this is in part owing to the fact that it takes a longer time, as Lord Bacon said a century ago, "to garden finely than to build stately." But the newness of our civilization is not sufficient apology. If so we should be spared the exhibition of gay carpets, fine mirrors and furniture in the "front parlor," of many a mechanic's, working-man's, and farmer's

\* Original date of July, 1852.

comfortable dwelling, where the "bare and bald" have pretty nearly supreme control in the "front yard."

What we lack perhaps more than all is not the capacity to perceive and enjoy the beauty of ornamental trees and shrubs — the rural embellishment alike of the cottage and the villa — but we are deficient in the knowledge and the opportunity of knowing how beautiful human habitations are made by a little taste, time, and means, expended in this way.

Abroad it is clearly seen that the taste has descended from the palace of the noble and the public parks and gardens of the nation to the hut of the simple peasant; but here, while our institutions have wisely prevented the perpetuation of accumulated estates that would speedily find their expression in all the luxury of rural taste, we have not yet risen to that general diffusion of culture and competence which may one day give to the many what in the old world belongs mainly to the favored few. In some localities, where that point has in some measure been arrived at already the result that we anticipate has, in a good degree, already been attained. And there are probably more pretty rural homes within ten miles of Boston owned by those who live in them and have made them, than ever sprang up in so short a space of time in any part of the world. The taste once formed there, it has become contagious, and is diffusing itself among all conditions of men and gradually elevating and making beautiful the whole neighborhood of that populous city.

In the country at large, however, even now, there cannot be said to be anything like a general taste for gardening or for embellishing the houses of the people. We are too much occupied with making a great deal to have reached that point when a man or a people thinks it wiser to understand how to enjoy a little well, than to exhaust both mind and body in getting an indefinite more.\* And there are also

\*This penetrating criticism of American life still rests heavily at our door. The fact yet gives deep concern to all those who love America and would prefer to see more spiritual ideals making headway. — F. A. W.

many who would gladly do something to give a sentiment to their houses, but are ignorant both of the materials and the way to set about it. Accordingly they plant odorous ailanthuses and filthy poplars to the neglect of graceful and salubrious maples.

The influence of commercial gardens on the neighborhood where they are situated is one of the best proofs of the growth of taste. They show that our people have no obtuseness of faculty as to what is beautiful, but only lack information and example to embellish with the heartiest good will. Take Rochester, N. Y., for instance, which, at the present moment, has perhaps the largest and most active nurseries in the Union. We are confident that the aggregate planting of fruits and ornamental trees within fifty miles of Rochester during the last ten years has been twice as much as has taken place in the same time in any three of the southern states. Philadelphia has long been famous for her exotic gardens, and now even the little yard plats of the city dwellings, are filled with roses, jasmines, *lagestroemias* and the like. Such facts as these plainly prove to us that only give our people a knowledge of the beauty of fine trees and plants and the method of cultivating them, and there is no sluggishness or inaptitude on the subject in the public mind.

In looking about for the readiest method of diffusing a knowledge of beautiful trees and plants, and thereby bettering our homes and our country several means suggest themselves which are worthy of attention.

The first of these is, by what private individuals may do.

There is scarcely a single fine private garden in the country which does not possess plants that are perhaps more or less coveted, or would at least be greatly prized by neighbors who do not possess, and perhaps cannot easily procure them. Many owners of such places cheerfully give away to their neighbors any spare plants that they may possess; but the majority decline, for the most part, to give away plants at all, because the indiscriminate practice subjects them to numerous and troublesome demands upon both the

time and generosity of even the most liberally disposed. But every gentleman who employs a gardener could well afford to allow that gardener to spend a couple of days in a season in propagating some one or two really valuable trees, shrubs, or plants, that would be a decided acquisition to the gardens of his neighborhood. One or two specimens of such tree or plant thus raised in abundance might be distributed freely during the planting season, or during a given week of the same, to all who would engage to plant and take care of them in their own grounds, and thus this tree or plant would soon become widely distributed about the whole adjacent country. Another season still another desirable tree or plant might be taken in hand and when ready for home planting might be scattered broadcast among those who desire to possess it, and so the labor of love might go on as convenience dictated till the greater part of the gardens, however small, within a considerable circumference would contain at least several of the most valuable, useful, and ornamental trees and shrubs for the climate.

The second means is by what the nurserymen may do.

We are very well aware that the first thought which will cross the mind of a selfish and narrow-minded nurseryman (if any such read the foregoing paragraph) is that such a course of gratuitous distribution of good plants, on the part of private persons, will speedily ruin his business. But he was never more greatly mistaken, as both observation and reason will convince him. Who are the nurseryman's best customers? That class of men who have long owned a garden, whether it be half a rood or many acres, who have never planted trees or, if any, have but those not worth planting? Not at all. His best customers are those who have formed a taste for trees by planting them, and who, having got a taste for improving, are seldom idle in the matter and keep pretty regular accounts with the dealers in trees. If you cannot get a person who thinks he has but little time or taste for improving his place to buy trees, and he will accept a plant, or a fruit-tree, or a shade tree, now and then from a neighbor whom he knows to be "curi-

ous in such things," — by all means, we say to the nurseryman, encourage him to plant at any rate and all rates.

If that man's tree turns out to his satisfaction he is an amateur, one only beginning to pick the shell, to be sure, but an amateur full fledged by-and-by. If he once gets a taste for gardening downright — if the flavor of his own rare-ripes touch his palate but once, as something quite different from what he has always, like a contented, ignorant donkey, bought in the market — if his Malmaison rose, radiant with the sentiment of the best of French women, and the loveliness of intrinsic bud-beauty once touches his hitherto dull eyes, so that the scales of his blindness to the fact that one rose differs from another, fall off for ever — then we say, thereafter he is one of the nurseryman's best customers. Begging is both too slow and too dependent a position for him and his garden soon fills up by ransacking the nurseryman's catalogues, and it is more likely to be swamped by the myriad of things which he would think very much alike (if he had not bought them by different appellations), than by any empty spaces waiting for the liberality of more enterprising cultivators.

And thus, if the nurseryman can satisfy himself with our reasoning that he ought not object to the amateur's becoming a gratuitous distributor of certain plants, we would persuade him for much the same reason, to follow the example himself. No person can propagate a tree or plant with so little cost and so much ease as one whose business it is to do so. And we may add, no one is more likely to know the really desirable varieties of trees or plants than he is. No one so well knows as himself that the newest things — most zealously sought after at high prices — are by no means those which will give the most permanent satisfaction in a family garden. And accordingly it is almost always the older and well-tried standard trees and plants, those that the nurseryman can best afford to spare, those that he can grow most cheaply, that he would best serve the diffusion of popular taste by distributing gratis. We think it would be best for all parties if the variety were very limited, and we doubt



whether the distribution of two valuable hardy trees or climbers for five years, or till they became so common all over the surroundings as to make a distinct feature of embellishment, would not be more serviceable than disseminating a larger number of species. It may appear to some of our commercial readers an odd recommendation to urge them to give away precisely that which it is their business to sell, but we are not talking at random when we say most confidently that such a course, steadily pursued by amateurs and nurserymen throughout the country for ten years, would increase the taste for planting and the demand for trees five hundred fold.\*

The third means is by what the horticultural societies may do.

We believe there are now about forty horticultural societies in North America. Hitherto they have contented themselves year after year with giving pretty much the same old schedule of premiums for the best cherries, cabbages, and carnations, all over the country, till the stimulus begins to wear out, somewhat like the effects of opium or tobacco, on confirmed habitués. Let them adopt our scheme of popularizing the taste for horticulture by giving premiums of certain select small assortments of standard fruit trees, ornamental trees, shrubs, and vines (purchased by the society of the nurserymen) to the cultivators of such small gardens, suburban door-yards, or cottage inclosures, within a distance of ten miles round, as the inspecting committee shall decide to be best worthy, by their air of neatness, order, and attention, of such premiums. In this way the valuable plants will fall into the right hands, the vendor of trees and plants will be directly the gainer, and the stimulus given to cottage gardens and the spread of the popular taste will be immediate and decided.

\* Record should be made of the very great influence for good exercised by the nurserymen of America during the past 100 years, not only in the particular manner recommended by Mr. Downing, but in many other ways. It need not go unremembered in this connection that Mr. Downing himself was first of all a nurseryman. — F. A. W.

"Tall oaks from little acorns grow" is a remarkably trite aphorism, but one the truth of which no one who knows the aptitude of our people or our intrinsic love of refinement and elegance will underrate or gainsay. If, by such simple means as we have here pointed out, our great farm on this side of the Atlantic, with the water-privilege of both oceans, could be made to wear a little less the air of Canada-thistle-dom, and show a little more sign of blossoming like the rose, we should look upon it as a step so much nearer the millennium. In Saxony the traveller beholds with no less surprise and delight on the road between Wiessenfels and Halle quantities of the most beautiful and rare shrubs and flowers growing along the foot-paths and by the sides of the hedges which line the public promenades. The custom prevails there among private individuals who have beautiful gardens of annually planting some of their surplus material along these public promenades for the enjoyment of those who have no gardens. And the custom is met in the same beautiful spirit by the people at large, for in the main, those embellishments that turn the highway into pleasure grounds are respected and grow and bloom as if within the inclosures.

Does not this argue a civilization among these "down-trodden nations" of central Europe, that would not be unwelcome in this, our land of equal rights and free schools?

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### *PUBLIC CEMETERIES AND PUBLIC GARDENS \**

ONE of the most remarkable illustrations of the popular taste in this country is to be found in the rise and progress of our rural cemeteries.

Twenty years ago nothing better than a common graveyard, filled with high grass and a chance sprinkling of weeds and thistles, was to be found in the Union. If there were one or two exceptions, like the burial ground at New Haven, where a few willow trees broke the monotony of the scene, they existed only to prove the rule more completely.

Eighteen years ago Mount Auburn, about six miles from Boston, was made a rural cemetery. It was then a charming natural site, finely varied in surface, containing about 80 acres of land and admirably clothed by groups and masses of native forest trees. It was tastefully laid out, monuments were built, and the whole highly embellished. No sooner was attention generally roused to the charms of this first American cemetery, than the idea took the public mind by storm. Travellers made pilgrimages to the Athens of New England, solely to see the realization of their long cherished dream of a resting place for the dead, at once sacred from profanation, dear to the memory, and captivating to the imagination.

Not twenty years have passed since that time; and, at the present moment, there is scarcely a city of note in the whole country that has not its rural cemetery. The three leading cities of the north, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, have, each of them, besides their great cemeteries, — Greenwood, Laurel Hill, Mount Auburn, — many others of less note, but any of which would have astonished and

\* Original date of July, 1849.

delighted their inhabitants twenty years ago. Philadelphia has, we learn, nearly twenty rural cemeteries at the present moment, several of them belonging to distinct societies, sects or associations, while others are open to all.\*

The great attraction of these cemeteries, to the mass of the community, is not in the fact that they are burial places or solemn places of meditation for the friends of the deceased, or striking exhibitions of monumental sculpture, though all these have their influence. All these might be realized in a burial ground planted with straight lines of willows and sombre avenues of evergreens. The true secret of the attraction lies in the natural beauty of the sites and in the tasteful and harmonious embellishment of these sites by art. Nearly all these cemeteries were rich portions of forest land, broken by hill and dale and varied by copses and glades, like Mount Auburn and Greenwood, or old country-seats richly wooded with fine planted trees, like Laurel Hill. Hence, to an inhabitant of the town, a visit to one of these spots has the united charm of nature and art, — the double wealth of rural and moral associations. It awakens at the same moment the feeling of human sympathy and the love of natural beauty implanted in every heart. His must be a dull or a trifling soul that neither swells with emotion nor rises with admiration at the varied beauty of these lovely and hallowed spots.

Indeed, in the absence of great public gardens, such as we must surely one day have in America, our rural cemeteries are doing a great deal to enlarge and educate the popular taste in rural embellishment. They are for the most part laid out with admirable taste; they contain the greatest variety of trees and shrubs to be found in the country, and several of them are kept in a manner seldom equalled in private places.†

\* We made a rough calculation from some data obtained at Philadelphia lately, by which we find that, including the cost of the lots, more than a million and a half dollars have been expended in the purchase and decoration of cemeteries in that neighborhood alone. — A. J. D.

† Laurel Hill is especially rich in rare trees. We saw last month almost every procurable species of hardy tree and shrub growing there, among

The character of each of the three great cemeteries is essentially distinct. Greenwood, the largest, and unquestionably the finest, is grand, dignified, and park-like. It is laid out in a broad and simple style, commands noble ocean views, and is admirably kept. Mount Auburn is richly picturesque in its varied hill and dale, and owes its charm mainly to this variety and intricacy of sylvan features. Laurel Hill is a charming pleasure ground, filled with beautiful and rare shrubs and flowers; at this season, a wilderness of roses, as well as fine trees and monuments.\*

To enable the reader to form a correct idea of the influence which these beautiful cemeteries constantly exercise on the

others, the Cedar of Lebanon, the Deodar Cedar, the Paulownia, the Araucaria, etc. Rhododendrons and Azaleas were in full bloom; and the purple Beeches, the weeping Ash, rare Junipers, Pines, and deciduous trees were abundant in many parts of the grounds. Twenty acres of new ground have just been added to this cemetery. It is a better arboretum than can easily be found elsewhere in the country. — A. J. D.

\* Few things are perfect; and beautiful and interesting as our rural cemeteries now are, more beautiful and interesting than anything of the same kind abroad, — we cannot pass by one feature in all, marked by the most violent bad taste; we mean the hideous *ironmongery* which they all more or less display. Why, if the separate lots must be inclosed with iron railings, the railings should not be of simple and unobtrusive patterns, we are wholly unable to conceive. As we now see them, by far the greater part are so ugly as to be positive blots on the beauty of the scene. Fantastic conceits and gimcracks in iron might be pardonable as adornments of the balustrade of a circus or a temple of Comus; but how reasonable beings can tolerate them as inclosures to the quiet grave of a family and in such scenes of sylvan beauty is mountain high above our comprehension.

But this is not all; as if to show how far human infirmity can go, we noticed lately several lots in one of these cemeteries, not only inclosed with a most barbarous piece of *irony*, but the gate of which was positively ornamented with the coat of arms of the owner, accompanied by a brass doorplate, on which was engraved the owner's name and city residence! All the world has amused itself with the epitaph on a tombstone in Père la Chaise, erected by a wife to her husband's memory in which, after recapitulating the many virtues of the departed, the bereaved one concludes with — "his disconsolate widow still continues the business, No. —, Rose-street, Paris." We really have some doubts if the disconsolate widow's epitaph advertisement is not in better taste than the cemetery brass doorplate immortality of our friends at home. — A. J. D.

public mind it is only necessary to refer to the rapidity with which they have increased in fifteen years, as we have just remarked. To enable them to judge how largely they arouse public curiosity, we may mention that at Laurel Hill, four miles from Philadelphia, an account was kept of the number of visitors during last season; and the sum total, as we were told by one of the directors, was nearly 30,000 persons who entered the gates between April and December, 1848. Judging only from occasional observations, we should imagine that double that number visit Greenwood, and certainly an equal number, Mount Auburn, in a season.\*

We have already remarked that, in the absence of public gardens, rural cemeteries in a certain degree supplied their place. But does not this general interest, manifested in these cemeteries, prove that public gardens, established in a liberal and suitable manner near our large cities would be equally successful? If 30,000 persons visit a cemetery in a single season, would not a large public garden be equally a matter of curious investigation? Would not such gardens educate the public taste more rapidly than anything else? And would not the progress of horticulture as a science and an art be equally benefited by such establishments? The passion for rural pleasures is destined to be the predominant passion of all the more thoughtful and educated portion of our people, and any means of gratifying their love for ornamental or useful gardening will be eagerly seized by hundreds of thousands of our countrymen.

Let us suppose a joint-stock company formed in any of our cities for the purpose of providing its inhabitants with the luxury of a public garden. A site should be selected with the same judgment which has already been shown by the cemetery companies. It should have a varied surface,

\* An interesting and significant comparison may be made between 1848 and the present. There are now several public parks and playgrounds in the United States where the annual attendance exceeds one million, and at least one where the figure reaches approximately five million. — F. A. W.



FIG. 46. ORNAMENTAL MULLEINS IN A PUBLIC GARDEN

a good position, sufficient natural wood, with open space and good soil enough for the arrangement of all those portions which require to be newly planted.

Such a garden might, in the space of fifty to one hundred acres, afford an example of the principal modes of laying out grounds, thus teaching practical landscape gardening. It might contain a collection of all the hardy trees and shrubs that grow in this climate, each distinctly labelled, so that the most ignorant visitor could not fail to learn something of trees. It might have a botanical arrangement of plants and a lecture-room where at the proper season lectures on botany could be delivered, and the classes which should resort there could study with the growing plants under their eyes. It might be laid out so as, in its wooded position, to afford a magnificent drive for those who chose so to enjoy it; and it might be furnished with suitable ices and other refreshments, so that, like the German gardens, it would be the great promenade of all strangers and citizens, visitors, or inhabitants of the city of whose suburbs it would form a part.

But how shall such an establishment be supported? Cemeteries are sustained by the prices paid for lots, which, though costing not a large sum each, make an enormous sum in the aggregate.

We answer, by a small admission fee. Only those who are shareholders would (like those owning lots in a cemetery) have entrance for their horses and carriages. This privilege alone would tempt hundreds to subscribe, thus adding to the capital, while the daily resort of citizens and strangers would give the necessary income; for no traveller would leave a city possessing such a public garden as we have described without seeing that, its most interesting feature. The finest band of music, the most rigid police, the certainty of an agreeable promenade and excellent refreshments, would, we think, as surely tempt a large part of the better class of the inhabitants of our cities to such a resort here as in Germany. If the road to Mount Auburn is now lined with coaches, continually carrying the inhabitants of



Boston by thousands and tens of thousands, is it not likely that such a garden, full of the most varied instruction, amusement, and recreation, would be ten times more visited? Fêtes might be held there, horticultural societies would make annual exhibitions there, and it would be the general holiday-ground of all who love to escape from the brick walls, paved streets, and stifling atmosphere of towns.

Would such a project pay? This is the home question of all the calculating part of the community, who must open their purse-strings to make it a substantial reality.

We can only judge by analogy. The mere yearly rent of Barnum's Museum in Broadway is, we believe, about \$10,000 (a sum more than sufficient to meet all the annual expenses of such a garden); and it is not only paid, but very large profits have been made there. Now, if hundreds of thousands of the inhabitants of cities like New York will pay to see stuffed boa-constrictors and un-human Belgian giants, or incur the expense and trouble of going five or six miles to visit Greenwood, we think it may safely be estimated that a much larger number would resort to a public garden, at once the finest park, the most charming drive, the most inviting pleasure ground, and the most agreeable promenade within their reach. That such a project, carefully planned, and liberally and judiciously carried out, would not only pay, in money, but largely civilize and refine the national character, foster the love of rural beauty, and increase the knowledge of and taste for rare and beautiful trees and plants, we cannot entertain a reasonable doubt.

It is only necessary for one of the three cities which first opened cemeteries to set the example, and the thing once fairly seen it becomes universal. The true policy of republics is to foster the taste for great public libraries, sculpture and picture galleries, parks, and gardens, which all may enjoy, since our institutions wisely forbid the growth of private fortunes sufficient to achieve these desirable results in any other way.

*Note.* — Experience has hardly carried out Mr. Downing's ideas, perhaps for the very reason that, soon after the time of his writing, it became



FIG. 47. GERMAN IRIS IN A PUBLIC GARDEN

the general policy in America for cities to provide free public parks and playgrounds. However certain resorts have been maintained very successfully under corporate ownership, frequently as attractions for transportation companies; or they have been maintained, like Atlantic City and Coney Island, by the concessionaries. Mr. Downing's reasoning was sound; but Americans have simply found another route to the same objective. — F. A. W.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### *THE NEW YORK PARK \**

THE leading topic of town gossip and newspaper paragraphs just now in New York is the new park proposed by Mayor Kingsland. Deluded New York has until lately contented itself with the little dooryards of space — mere grass-plats of verdure — which form the squares of the city, in the mistaken idea that they are parks. The fourth city in the world (with a growth that will soon make it the second), the commercial metropolis of a continent spacious enough to border both oceans, has not hitherto been able to afford sufficient land to give its citizens, the majority of whom live there the whole year round, any breathing space for pure air, any recreation ground for healthful exercise, any pleasant roads for riding or driving, or any enjoyment of that lovely and refreshing natural beauty from which they have, in leaving the country, reluctantly expatriated themselves for so many years, perhaps forever. Some few thousands, more fortunate than the rest, are able to escape for a couple of months into the country to find repose for body and soul in its leafy groves and pleasant pastures or to inhale new life on the refreshing seashore. But in the mean time the city is always full. Its steady

\* Original date of August, 1851.

\* It might be said that this essay on "The New York Park" has only a historic interest. Certainly it is of the utmost value from the standpoint of history, but it must seem worth while to everyone to review the development of the city park idea in America. In this development Mr. Downing played an important rôle. Another essay entitled "A Talk about Public Parks and Gardens," and dated October, 1848, has been omitted from the present edition, but it does not seem proper to neglect altogether the very important connection between the work of Mr. Downing in that time and our present enjoyment of splendid park systems in all American cities. — F. A. W.

population of five hundred thousand souls is always there, always on the increase. Every ship brings a live cargo from over-peopled Europe, to fill up its over-crowded lodging houses; every steamer brings hundreds of strangers to fill its thronged thoroughfares. Crowded hotels, crowded streets, hot summers, business pursued till it becomes a game of excitement, pleasure followed till its votaries are exhausted, where is the quiet reverse side of this picture of town life, intensified almost to distraction?

Mayor Kingsland spreads it out to the vision of the dwellers in this arid desert of business and dissipation — a green oasis for the refreshment of the city's soul and body. He tells the citizens of that feverish metropolis, as every intelligent man will tell them who knows the cities of the old world, that New York, and American cities generally, are voluntarily and ignorantly living in a state of complete forgetfulness of nature, and her innocent recreations. That, because it is needful in civilized life for men to live in cities, — yes, and unfortunately too, for children to be born and educated without a daily sight of the blessed horizon, — it is not, therefore, needful for them to be so miserly as to live utterly divorced from all pleasant and healthful intercourse with gardens, and green fields. He informs them that cool umbrageous groves have not forsworn themselves within town limits, and that half a million of people have a right to ask for the greatest happiness of parks and pleasure grounds, as well as for paving stones and gas lights.

Now that public opinion has fairly settled that a park is necessary, the parsimonious declare that the plot of one hundred and sixty acres proposed by Mayor Kingsland is extravagantly large. Shortsighted economists! If the future growth of the city were confined to the boundaries their narrow vision would fix, it would soon cease to be the commercial emporium of the country. If they were the purveyors of the young giant, he would soon present the sorry spectacle of a robust youth magnificently developed but whose extremities had outgrown every garment that they had provided to cover his nakedness.

These timid tax payers, and men nervous in their private pockets of the municipal expenditures, should take a lesson from some of their number to whose admirable foresight we owe the unity of materials displayed in the New York City Hall. Every one familiar with New York has wondered or smiled at the apparent perversity of taste which gave us a building, in the most conspicuous part of the city, and devoted to the highest municipal uses, three sides of which are pure white marble, and the fourth of coarse brown stone. But few of those who see that incongruity know that it was dictated by the narrow-sighted frugality of the common council who were its building committee, and who determined that it would be useless to waste marble on the rear of the City Hall, "*since that side would only be seen by persons living in the suburbs.*"

Thanking Mayor Kingsland most heartily for his proposed new park, the only objection we make to it is that it is too small. One hundred and sixty acres of park for a city that will soon contain three-quarters of a million of people! It is only a child's playground. Why London has over six thousand acres either within its own limits, or in the accessible suburbs, open to the enjoyment of its population — and six thousand acres composed too, either of the grandest and most lovely park scenery, like Kensington and Richmond, or of luxuriant gardens, filled with rare plants, hot-houses and hardy shrubs and trees, like the National Garden at Kew. Paris has its Garden of the Tuileries, whose alleys are lined with orange trees two hundred years old, whose parterres are gay with the brightest flowers, whose cool grooves of horse-chestnuts, stretching out to the Elysian Fields, are in the very midst of the city. Yes, and on its outskirts are Versailles (three thousand acres of imperial groves and gardens there also), and Fontainebleau, and St. Cloud, with all the rural, scenic, and palatial beauty that the opulence of the most profuse of French monarchs could create, all open to the people of Paris. Vienna has its great Prater, to make which, would swallow up most of the unimproved part of New York city. Munich has a

superb pleasure ground of five hundred acres, which makes the Arcadia of her citizens. Even the smaller towns are provided with public grounds to an extent that would beggar the imagination of our short sighted economists, who would deny a greenery to New York; Frankfort, for example, is skirted by the most beautiful gardens, formed upon the platform which made the old ramparts of the city — gardens filled with the loveliest plants and shrubs, tastefully grouped along walks over two miles in extent.

Looking at the present government of the city as about to provide, in the People's Park, a breathing zone and healthful place for exercise for a city of half a million of souls, we trust they will not be content with the limited number of acres already proposed. Five hundred acres is the smallest area that should be reserved for the future wants of such a city, now, while it may be obtained. Five hundred acres may be selected between Thirty-ninth-street and the Harlem River, including a varied surface of land, a good deal of which is yet waste area, so that the whole may be purchased at something like a million of dollars. In that area there would be space enough to have broad reaches of park and pleasure grounds, with a real feeling of the breadth and beauty of green fields, the perfume and freshness of nature. In its midst would be located the great distributing reservoirs of the Croton aqueduct, formed into lovely lakes of limpid water, covering many acres, and heightening the charm of the sylvan accessories by the finest natural contrast. In such a park the citizens who would take excursions in carriages or on horseback could have the substantial delights of country roads and country scenery and forget for a time the rattle of the pavements and the glare of brick walls. Pedestrians would find quiet and secluded walks when they wished to be solitary, and broad alleys filled with thousands of happy faces when they would be gay. The thoughtful denizen of the town would go out there in the morning, to hold converse with the whispering trees, and the weary tradesmen in the evening, to enjoy an hour of happiness by mingling in the open space with all the world.

The many beauties and utilities that would gradually grow out of a great park like this in a great city like New York suggest themselves immediately and forcibly. Where would be found so fitting a position for noble works of art, the statues, monuments, and buildings commemorative at once of the great men of the nation, of the history of the age and country, and the genius of our highest artists? In the broad area of such a verdant zone would gradually grow up,



FIG. 48. A JAPANESE PARK

as the wealth of the city increases, winter gardens of glass, like the great Crystal Palace, where the whole people could luxuriate in groves of the palms and spice trees of the tropics, at the same moment that sleighing parties glided swiftly and noiselessly over the snow-covered surface of the country-like avenues of the wintry park without. Zoological Gardens, like those of London and Paris, would gradually be formed by private subscription or public funds, where thousands of old and young would find daily pleasure in studying natural history, illustrated by all the wildest and strangest animals of the globe, almost as much at home



in their paddocks and jungles as if in their native forests; and Horticultural and Industrial Societies would hold their annual shows there, and great expositions of the arts would take place in spacious buildings within the park, far more fittingly than in the noise and din of the crowded streets of the city.

We have had said nothing of the social influence of such a great park in New York. But this is really the most interesting phase of the whole matter. It is a fact not a little remarkable that, ultra democratic as are the political tendencies of America, its most intelligent social tendencies are almost wholly in a contrary direction. And among the topics discussed by the advocates and opponents of the new park, none seem so poorly understood as the social aspect of the thing. It is, indeed, both curious and amusing to see the stand taken on the one hand by the million, that the park is made for the "upper ten," who ride in fine carriages, and, on the other hand, by the wealthy and refined, that a park in this country will be "usurped by rowdies and low people." Shame upon our republican compatriots who so little understand the elevating influences of the beautiful in nature and in art when enjoyed in common by thousands and hundreds of thousands of all classes without distinction! They can never have seen how all over France and Germany the whole population of the cities pass their afternoons and evenings together in the beautiful public parks and gardens. How they enjoy together the same music, breathe the same atmosphere of art, enjoy the same scenery, and grow into social freedom by the very influences of easy intercourse, space and beauty that surround them. In Germany, especially, they have never seen how the highest and the lowest partake alike of the common enjoyment — the prince seated beneath the trees on a rush-bottomed chair, before a little wooden table, supping his coffee or his ice, with the same freedom from state and pretension as the simplest subject. Drawing-room conventionalities are too narrow for a mile or two of spacious garden landscape, and one can be happy with ten thousand in the social free-

dom of a community of genial influences, without the unutterable pang of not having been introduced to the company present.

These social doubters who thus intrench themselves in the sole citadel of exclusiveness in republican America, mistake our people and their destiny. If we would but have listened to them our magnificent river and lake steamers, those real palaces of the million, would have had no velvet couches, no splendid mirrors, no luxurious carpets. Such costly and rare appliances of civilization, they would have told us, could only be rightly used by the privileged families of wealth, and would be trampled upon and utterly ruined by the democracy of the country who travel one hundred miles for half a dollar. And yet these, our floating palaces and our monster hotels, with their purple and fine linen, are they not respected by the majority who use them, as truly as other palaces by their rightful sovereigns? Alas, for the faithlessness of the few, who possess, regarding the capacity for culture of the many, who are wanting. Even upon the lower platform of liberty and education that the masses stand in Europe, we see the elevating influences of a wide popular enjoyment of galleries of art, public libraries, parks and gardens, which have raised the people in social civilization and social culture to a far higher level than we have yet attained in republican America. And yet this broad ground of popular refinement must be taken in republican America, for it belongs of right more truly here than elsewhere. It is republican in its very idea and tendency. It takes up popular education where the common school and ballot-box leave it, and raises up the working man to the same level of enjoyment with the man of leisure and accomplishment. The higher social and artistic elements of every man's nature lie dormant within him, and every laborer is a possible gentleman, not by the possession of money or fine clothes, but through the refining influence of intellectual and moral culture. Open wide, therefore, the doors of your libraries and picture galleries, all ye true republicans! Build halls where knowledge shall be freely

diffused among men, and not shut up within the narrow walls of narrower institutions. Plant spacious parks in your cities and unloose their gates as wide as the gates of morning to the whole people. As there are no dark places at noon-day, so education and culture — the true sunshine of the soul — will banish the plague spots of democracy; and the dread of the ignorant exclusive who has no faith in the refinement of a republic, will stand abashed in the next century before a whole people whose system of voluntary education embraces (combined with perfect individual freedom), not only common schools of rudimentary knowledge, but common enjoyments for all classes in the higher realms of art, letters, science, and social recreations. Were our legislators but wise enough to understand to-day the destinies of the New World, the gentility of Sir Philip Sidney, made universal, would be not half so much a miracle fifty years hence in America as the idea of a whole nation of laboring men reading and writing was, in his day, in England.

## APPENDIX I

### LIST OF ROSES

List of Roses recommended by Prof. A. C. Beal, for New York and the Northeastern states (Bailey's Standard Cyclopedia of Horticulture; V: 3009). See page 261.

*Hybrid Perpetual.* — Alfred Colomb, A. K. Williams, Anna de Diesbach, Baron de Bonstetten, Baroness Rothschild, Captain Christy, Captain Hayward, Clio, Dr. O'Donel Browne, Duke of Edinburgh, Duke of Teck, Frau Karl Druschki, General Jacqueminot, George Arends, Gloire de Chedane Guinoisseau, Gloire Lyonnaise, Hugh Dickson, J. B. Clark, John Hopper, Lady Helen Stewart, Madam Gabriel Luizet, Magna Charta, Margaret Dickson, Marshall P. Wilder, Mrs. John Laing, Mrs. R. G. Sharman-Crawford, Oscar Cordel, Paul Neyron, Prince Camille de Rohan, Ulrich Brunner.

*Hybrid Tea.* — Antoine Rivoire, Augustine Guinoisse, British Queen, Caroline Testout, Chateau de Clos Vougeot, Chrissie Mackellar, Dean Hole, Dorothy Page Roberts, Duchess of Sutherland, Duchess of Westminster, Earl of Warwick, Edith Part, Etoile de France, Francis Scott Key, Frau Lilla Rautenstrauch, Geoffrey Henslow, George Dickson, Grace Molyneux, Gruss an Teplitz, Gustav Grunerwald, Hector MacKenzie, Irish Brightness, Jonkheer J. L. Mock, Kaiserin Augusta Victoria, Killarney, Killarney Queen, Königin Carola, Lady Alice Stanley, Lady Ashtown, La France, Laurent Carle, Lieutenant Chaure, Madame Jules Grolez, Madame Hector Leuillot, Madame Segond Weber, Marquise de Sinety, Mevrouw Dora Van Tets, Monsieur Joseph Hill, Mrs. A. R. Waddell, Mrs. Wakefield, Christie-Miller, Old-Gold, Prince de Bulgarie, Queen Mary, Simplicity, Souvenir du President Carnot, Souvenir de

Gustav Prat, Sunburst, Viscountess Folkestone, Wellesley, White Killarney, Willowmere.

*Pernetiana*. — Arthur R. Goodwin, Louise Catherine Breslau, Lyon, Madame Ruau, Rayon d'Or, Soleil d'Or.

*Polyantha or Baby Rambler*. — Bordure, Catherine Zeimet, Cecile Brunner, Clothilde Soupert, Ellen Poulsen, George Elgar, Gruss an Aachen, Leonie Lamesch, Louise Walter, Madame Jules Gouchault, Maman Turbat, Marie Brissonet, Marie Pavie, Mignonette, Mosella, Mrs. W. H. Cutbush, Schneekopf, Triomphe Orleanais.

*Moss Roses*. — Blanche Moreau, Comtesse de Murinais, Crested Moss, Crimson Glove, Princess Adelaide.

*Hybrid Sweetbriers*. — Amy Robsart, Anne of Geierstein, Brenda, Catherine Seyton, Edith Bellenden, Flora McIvor, Green Mantle, Jeannie Deans, Julie Mannering, Lady Penzance, Lord Penzance, Lucy Ashton, Lucy Bertram, Meg Merrilies, Minna, Rose Bradwardine.

*Hardy Yellow Roses*. — Austrian Copper, Harrison's Yellow, Persian Yellow.

*Bourbon and Noisette*. — Beauty of Rosemawr, Burbank, Caroline Marniesse, Champion of the World, Hermosa, Mrs. Paul, Souvenir de la Malmaison.

*Hybrid China and Gallica Roses*. — Madame Plantier, Rosa Mundi, York and Lancaster.

*Rugosa Hybrids*. — Agnes Emily Carman, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, Madame Georges Bruant, Madame Lucien Villeminot, Nova Zembla, Perfection l'Hay, Blanc Double de Coubert.

*Climbing roses, large-flowered types*. — Baltimore Belle, Christine Wright, Climbing American Beauty, Countess M. H. Chotek, Dr. W. Van Fleet, May Queen, Prairie Queen, Ruby Queen, Tausendschön, W. C. Egan.

*Climbing roses, many-flowered types*. — Count Zeppelin, Crimson Rambler, Dawson, Dorothy Perkins, Excelsa, Gardenia, Goldfinch, Lady Gay, Lady Godiva, Minnehaha, Mrs. F. W. Flight, Mrs. H. M. Walsh, Rene Andre, Rubin, Source d'Or, Thalia, Trier, Wartburg, White Dorothy.

*Climbing roses, single-flowered types*. — American Pillar,

Bonnie Belle, Delight, Eisenach, Evangeline, Jersey Beauty, Hiawatha, Leuchtstern, Paradise, Pink Roamer, Silver Moon.

*Tea-scented roses.* — Duchess de Brabant, Harry Kirk, Helen Gould, Isabella Sprunt, Madame Lambard, Madame Joseph Schwartz, Maman Cochet, Marie Lambert, Mrs. Herbert Hawksworth, Papa Gontier, Princess de Sagan, Souvenir de Catherine Gillot, William R. Smith, White Maman Cochet.

*Climbing Tea and other tender roses.* — Birdie Blye, Climbing Testout, Madame Alfred Carriere, Madame Driout, Mrs. Robert Peary, Reine Marie Henriette.

*Bengal roses.* — Archduke Charles, Douglas, Lucullus, Madame Eugene Marlitt, Maddalena Scalarandis, Queen's Scarlet, and Viridiflora.

*Single Hybrid Tea roses.* — Iona, Irish Beauty, Irish Brightness, Irish Elegance, Irish Harmony, Irish Modesty, and Simplicity.

## APPENDIX II

### MEMOIR \*

**A**NDREW JACKSON DOWNING was born at Newburgh, upon the Hudson, on the spot where he always lived and which he always loved more than any other, on the 30th of October, 1815. His father and mother were both natives of Lexington, Massachusetts, and, upon their marriage, removed to Orange County, New York, where they settled, some thirty or forty miles from Newburgh. Presently, however, they came from the interior of the county to the banks of the river. The father built a cottage upon the highlands of Newburgh, on the skirts of the town, and there his five children were born. He had begun life as a wheelwright, but abandoned the trade to become a nurseryman, and after working prosperously in his garden for twenty-one years, died in 1822.

Andrew was born many years after the other children. He was the child of his parents' age, and, for that reason, very dear. He began to talk before he could walk, when he was only nine months old, and the wise village gossips shook their heads in his mother's little cottage, and prophesied a bright career for the precocious child. At eleven months that career manifestly began, in the gossips' eyes, by his walking bravely about the room: a handsome, cheerful, intelligent child, but quiet and thoughtful, petted by

\* This memoir is from the pen of George William Curtis, one of the best-known and wisest literary men of his day, and an intimate personal friend of Mr. Downing. It was written in 1853 for the collection of "Rural Essays," edited by Mr. Curtis.

In the volume of "Rural Essays" appears also another tribute from another literary celebrity of the day in the form of a letter to Mr. Downing's friends by Miss Friedrika Bremer. It has been thought best to omit this letter from the present edition, but students and lovers of Downing should not fail to search it out and read it. — F. A. W.

the elder brothers and sister, standing sometimes in the door, as he grew older, and watching the shadows of the clouds chase each other over the Fishkill mountains upon the opposite side of the river; soothed by the universal silence of the country, while the constant occupation of the father, and of the brother who worked with him in the nursery, made the boy serious, by necessarily leaving him much alone.

In the little cottage upon the Newburgh highlands, looking down upon the broad bay which the Hudson river there makes, before winding in a narrow stream through the highlands of West Point, and looking eastward across the river to the Fishkill hills, which rise gradually from the bank into a gentle mountain boldness, and northward, up the river, to shores that do not obstruct the horizon, — passed the first years of the boy's life, thus early befriending him with one of the loveliest of landscapes. While his father and brother were pruning and grafting their trees, and the other brother was busily at work in the comb factory, where he was employed, the young Andrew ran alone about the garden, playing his solitary games in the presence of the scene whose influence helped to mould his life, and which, even so early, filled his mind with images of rural beauty. His health, like that of most children born in their parents' later years, was not at all robust. The father, watching the slight form glancing among his trees, and the mother, aware of her boy sitting silent and thoughtful, had many a pang of apprehension, which was not relieved by the ominous words of the gossips that it was "hard to raise these smart children," — the homely modern echo of the old Greek fancy, "Whom the gods love die young."

The mother, a thrifty housekeeper and a religious woman, occupied with her many cares, cooking, mending, scrubbing, and setting things to rights, probably looked forward with some apprehension to the future condition of her sensitive Benjamin, even if he lived. The dreamy, shy ways of the boy were not such as indicated the stern stuff that enables poor men's children to grapple with the world.



Left to himself, his will began to grow imperious. The busy mother could not severely scold her ailing child; but a sharp rebuke had probably often been pleasanter to him than the milder treatment that resulted from affectionate compassion, but showed no real sympathy. It is evident, from the tone in which he always spoke of his childhood, that his recollections of it were not altogether agreeable. It was undoubtedly clouded by a want of sympathy, which he could not understand at the time, but which appeared plainly enough when his genius came into play. It is the same kind of clouded childhood that so often occurs in literary biography, where there was great mutual affection and no ill feeling, but a lack of that instinctive apprehension of motives and aims, which makes each one perfectly tolerant of each other.

When Andrew was seven years old, his father died, and his elder brother succeeded to the management of the nursery business. Andrew's developing tastes led him to the natural sciences, to botany and mineralogy. As he grew older he began to read the treatises upon these favorite subjects, and went, at length, to an academy at Montgomery, a town not far from Newburgh, and in the same county. Those who remember him here, speak of him as a thoughtful, reserved boy, looking fixedly out of his large, dark brown eyes, and carrying his brow a little inclined forward, as if slightly defiant. He was a poor boy, and very proud. Doubtless that indomitable will had already resolved that he should not be the least of the men that he and his schoolfellows would presently become. He was shy, and made few friends among the boys. He kept his own secrets, and his companions do not remember that he gave any hint, while at Montgomery Academy, of his peculiar power. Neither looking backward nor forward, was the prospect very fascinating to his dumb, and probably a little dogged, ambition. Behind were the few first years of childhood, sickly, left much alone in the cottage and garden, with nothing in those around him (as he felt without knowing it) that strictly sympathized with him; and yet, as

always in such cases, of a nature whose development craved the most generous sympathy: these few years, too, cast among all the charms of a landscape which the Fishkill hills lifted from littleness, and the broad river inspired with a kind of grandeur; years, which the universal silence of the country, always so imposing to young imaginations, and the rainbow pomp of the year, as it came and went up and down the river-banks and over the mountains, and the general solitude of country life, were not very likely to enliven. Before, lay a career of hard work in a pursuit which rarely enriches the workman, with little apparent promise of leisure to pursue his studies or to follow his tastes. It is natural enough, that in the midst of such prospects, the boy, delicately organized to appreciate his position, should have gone to his recitations and his play in a very silent — if not stern — manner, all the more reserved and silent for the firm resolution to master and not be mastered. It is hard to fancy that he was ever a blithe boy. The gravity of maturity came early upon him. Those who saw him only in later years can, probably, easily see the boy at Montgomery Academy, by fancying him quite as they knew him, less twenty or twenty-five years. One by one, the boys went from the academy to college, or into business, and when Andrew was sixteen years old, he also left the academy and returned home.

He, too, had been hoping to go to college; but the family means forbade. His mother, anxious to see him early settled, urged him, as his elder brothers were both doing well in business — the one as a nurseryman, and the other, who had left the comb factory, practising ably and prosperously as a physician — to enter as a clerk into a drygoods store. That request explains the want of delight with which he remembered his childhood; because it shows that his good, kind mother, in the midst of her baking, and boiling, and darning the children's stockings, made no allowance — as how should she, not being able to perceive them — for the possibly very positive tastes of her boy. Besides, the first duty of each member of the poor household was, as she

justly conceived, to get a living; and as Andrew was a delicate child, and could not lift and carry much, nor brave the chances of an out-door occupation, it was better that he should be in the shelter of a store. He, however, a youth of sixteen years, fresh from the studies, and dreams, and hopes of the Montgomery Academy, found his first duty to be the gentle withstanding of his mother's wish; and quite willing to "settle," if he could do it in his own way, joined his brother in the management of the nursery. He had no doubt of his vocation. Since it was clear that he must directly do something, his fine taste and exquisite appreciation of natural beauty, his love of natural forms, and the processes and phenomena of natural life, immediately determined his choice. Not in vain had his eyes first looked upon the mountains and the river. Those silent companions of his childhood claimed their own in the spirit with which the youth entered upon his profession. To the poet's eye began to be added the philosopher's mind; and the great spectacle of Nature which he had loved as beauty, began to enrich his life as knowledge. Yet I remember, as showing that with all his accurate science he was always a poet, he agreed in many conversations that the highest enjoyment of beauty was quite independent of use; and that while the pleasure of a botanist who could at once determine the family and species of a plant, and detail all the peculiarities and fitness of its structure, was very great and inappreciable, yet that it was upon a lower level than the instinctive delight in the beauty of the same flower. The botanist could not have the highest pleasure in the flower if he were not a poet. The poet would increase the variety of his pleasure, if he were a botanist. It was this constant subjection of science to the sentiment of beauty that made him an artist, and did not leave him an artisan; and his science was always most accurate and profound, because the very depth and delicacy of his feeling for beauty gave him the utmost patience to learn, and the greatest rapidity to adapt, the means of organizing to the eye the ideal image in his mind.

About this time the Baron de Liderer, the Austrian Consul General, who had a summer retreat in Newburgh, began to notice the youth, whose botanical and mineralogical tastes so harmonized with his own. Nature keeps fresh the feelings of her votaries, and the Baron, although an old man, made hearty friends with Downing; and they explored together the hills and lowlands of the neighborhood, till it had no more vegetable nor mineral secrets from the enthusiasts. Downing always kept in the hall of his house, a cabinet, containing mineralogical specimens collected in these excursions. At the house of the Baron, also, and in that of his wealthy neighbor, Edward Armstrong, Downing discovered how subtly cultivation refines men as well as plants, and there first met that polished society whose elegance and grace could not fail to charm him as essential to the most satisfactory intercourse, while it presented the most entire contrast to the associations of his childhood. It is not difficult to fancy the lonely child, playing unheeded in the garden, and the dark, shy boy, of the Montgomery Academy, meeting with a thrill of satisfaction, as if he had been waiting for them, the fine gentlemen and ladies at the Consul General's, and the wealthy neighbor's, Mr. Armstrong, at whose country-seat he was introduced to Mr. Charles Augustus Murray, when, for the first time, he saw one of the class that he never ceased to honor for their virtues and graces — the English gentleman. At this time, also, the figure of Raphael Hoyle, an English landscape painter, flits across his history. Congenial in taste and feeling, and with varying knowledge, the two young men rambled together over the country near Newburgh, and while Hoyle caught upon canvas the colors and forms of the flowers, and the outline of the landscape, Downing instructed him in their history and habits, until they wandered from the actual scene into discussions dear to both, of art, and life, and beauty; or the artist piqued the imagination of his friend with stories of English parks, and of Italian vineyards, and of cloud-capped Alps, embracing every zone and season, as they rose, — while the untravelled youth

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looked across the river to the Fishkill hills, and imagined Switzerland. This soon ended. Raphael Hoyle died. The living book of travel and romantic experience, in which the youth who had wandered no farther than to Montgomery Academy and to the top of the South Beacon, — the highest hill of the Fishkill range, — had so deeply read of scenes and a life that suited him, was closed forever.

Little record is left of these years of application, of work, and study. The Fishkill hills and the broad river, in whose presence he had always lived, and the quiet country around Newburgh, which he had so thoroughly explored, began to claim some visible token of their influence. It is pleasant to know that his first literary works were recognitions of their charms. It shows the intellectual integrity of the man, that despite glowing hopes and restless ambition for other things, his first essay was written from his experience; it was a description of the "Danskamer," or Devil's Dancing-Ground — a point on the Hudson, seven miles above Newburgh — published in the *New York Mirror*. A description of Beacon Hill followed.

He wrote, then, a discussion of novel-reading, and some botanical papers, which were published in a Boston journal. Whether he was discouraged by the ill success of these attempts, or perceived that he was not yet sufficient master of his resources to present them properly to the public, does not appear, but he published nothing more for several years. Perhaps he knew that upon the subjects to which his natural tastes directed his studies, nothing but experience spoke with authority. Whatever the reason of his silence, however, he worked on unyieldingly, studying, proving, succeeding; finding time, also, to read the poets and the philosophers, and to gain that familiarity with elegant literature which always graced his own composition. Of this period of his life, little record, but great results, remain. With his pen, and books, and microscope, in the red house, and his pruning-knife and sharp eye in the nursery and garden, he was learning, adapting, and triumphing, — and also, doubtless, dreaming and resolving. If any stranger

wishing to purchase trees at the nursery of the Messrs. Downing, in Newburgh, had visited that pleasant town, and transacted business with the younger partner, he would have been perplexed to understand why the younger partner with his large knowledge, his remarkable power of combination, his fine taste, his rich cultivation, his singular force and precision of expression, his evident mastery of his profession, was not a recognized authority in it, and why he had never been heard of. For it was remarkable in Downing, to the end, that he always attracted attention and excited speculation. The boy of the Montgomery Academy carried that slightly defiant head into the arena of life, and seemed always too much a critical observer not to challenge wonder, sometimes, even, to excite distrust. That was the eye which in the vegetable world had scanned the law through the appearance, and followed through the landscape the elusive line of beauty. It was a full, firm, serious eye. He did not smile with his eyes as many do, but they held you as in a grasp, looking from under their cover of dark brows.

The young man, now twenty years old or more, and hard at work, began to visit the noble estates upon the banks of the Hudson, to extend his experience, and confirm his nascent theories of art in landscape-gardening. Studying in the red cottage, and working in the nursery upon the Newburgh highlands, he had early seen that in a new, and unworked, and quite boundless country, with every variety of kindly climate and available soil, where fortunes arose in a night, an opportunity was offered to Art, of achieving a new and characteristic triumph. To touch the continent lying chaotic, in mountain, and lake, and forest, with a finger that should develop all its resources of beauty, for the admiration and benefit of its children, seemed to him a task worthy the highest genius. This was the dream that dazzled the silent years of his life in the garden, and inspired and strengthened him in every exertion. As he saw more and more of the results of this spirit in the beautiful Hudson country-seats, he was, naturally, only the more resolved. To

lay out one garden well, in conformity with the character of the surrounding landscape, in obedience to the truest taste, and to make a man's home, and its grounds, and its accessories, as genuine works of art as any picture or statue that the owner had brought over the sea, was, in his mind, the first step toward the great result.

At the various places upon the river, as he visited them from time to time, he was received as a gentleman, a scholar, and the most practical man of the party, would necessarily be welcomed. He sketched, he measured; "in a walk he plucks from an overhanging bough a single leaf, examines its color, form and structure; inspects it with his microscope, and, having recorded his observations, presents it to his friend, and invites him to study it, as suggestive of some of the first principles of rural architecture and economy." No man enjoyed society more, and none ever lost less time. His pleasure trips from point to point upon the river were the excursions of the honey-bee into the flower. He returned richly laden; and the young partner, feeling from childhood the necessity of entire self-dependence, continued to live much alone, to be reserved, but always affable and gentle. These travels were usually brief, and strictly essential to his education. He was wisely getting ready; it would be so fatal to speak without authority, and authority came only with much observation and many years.

But, during these victorious incursions into the realms of experience, the younger partner had himself been conquered. Directly opposite the red cottage, upon the other side of the river, at Fishkill Landing, lay, under blossoming locust trees, the estate and old family mansion of John P. De Wint, Esq. The place had the charms of a "moated grange," and was quite the contrast of the elegant care and incessant cultivation that marked the grounds of the young man in Newburgh. But the fine old place, indolently lying in luxuriant decay, was the seat of boundless hospitality and social festivity. The spacious piazzas, and the gently sloping lawn, which made the foreground of one of the most exquisite glimpses of the Hudson, rang all summer long with happy laughter.

Under those blossoming locust trees were walks that led to the shore, and the moon hanging over Cro' Nest recalled to all loiterers along the bank the loveliest legends of the river. In winter the revel shifted from the lawn to the frozen river. One such gay household is sufficient nucleus for endless enjoyment. From the neighboring West Point, only ten miles distant, came gallant young officers, boating in summer, and skating in winter, to serenade under the locusts, or join the dance upon the lawn. Whatever was young and gay was drawn into the merry maelstrom, and the dark-haired boy from Newburgh, now grown, somehow, to be a gentleman of quiet and polished manner, found himself, even when in the grasp of the scientific coils of Parmentier, Repton, Price, Loudon, Lindley, and the rest, — or busy with knife, clay, and grafts, — dreaming of the grange beyond the river, and of the Marianna he had found there.

Summer lay warm upon the hills and river; the landscape was yet untouched by the scorching July heats; and on the seventh of June, 1838, — he being then in his twenty-third year, — Downing was married to Caroline, eldest daughter of J. P. De Wint, Esq. At this time, he dissolved the business connection with his elder brother, and continued the nursery by himself. There were other changes also. The busy mother of his childhood was busy no longer. She had now been for several years an invalid, unable even to walk in the garden. She continued to live in the little red cottage which Downing afterwards removed to make way for a green-house. Her sons were men now, and her daughter a woman. The necessity for her own exertion was passed, and her hold upon life was gradually loosened, until she died in 1839.

Downing now considered himself ready to begin the career for which he had so long been preparing; and very properly his first work was his own house, built in the garden of his father, and only a few rods from the cottage in which he was born. It was a simple house, in an Elizabethan style, by which he designed to prove that a beautiful, and durable, and convenient mansion, could be built as cheaply as a poor



and tasteless temple, which seemed to be, at that time, the highest American conception of a fine residence. In this design he entirely succeeded. His house, which did not, however, satisfy his maturer eye, was externally very simple, but extremely elegant; indeed, its chief impression was that of elegance. Internally it was spacious and convenient, very gracefully proportioned and finished, and marked everywhere by the same spirit. Wherever the eye fell, it detected that a wiser eye had been before it. All the forms and colors, the style of the furniture, the frames of the mirrors and pictures, the patterns of the carpets, were harmonious, and it was a harmony as easily achieved by taste as discord by vulgarity. There was no painful conformity, no rigid monotony, there was nothing finical nor foppish in this elegance — it was the necessary result of knowledge and skill. While the house was building, he lived with his wife at her father's. He personally superintended the work, which went briskly forward. From the foot of the Fishkill hills beyond the river, other eyes superintended it, also, scanning, with a telescope, the Newburgh garden and growing house; and, possibly, from some rude telegraph, as a white cloth upon a tree, or a blot of black paint upon a smooth board, Hero knew whether at evening to expect her Leander.

The house was at length finished. A graceful and beautiful building stood in the garden, higher and handsomer than the little red cottage — a very pregnant symbol to any poet who should chance that way and hear the history of the architect.

Once fairly established in his house, it became the seat of the most gracious hospitality, and was a beautiful illustration of that "rural home" upon whose influence Downing counted so largely for the education and intelligent patriotism of his countrymen. His personal exertions were unremitting. He had been for some time projecting a work upon his favorite art of Landscape Gardening, and presently began to throw it into form. His time for literary labor was necessarily limited by his superintendence of the nursery. But the book was at length completed, and in the year 1841,

the Author being then twenty-six years old, Messrs. Wiley & Putnam published in New York and London, "A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening adapted to North America, with a view to the Improvement of Country Residences. With Remarks on Rural Architecture. By A. J. Downing." The most concise and comprehensive definition of Landscape Gardening that occurs in his works, is to be found in the essay, "Hints on Landscape Gardening." "It is an art," he says, "which selects from natural materials that abound in any country its best sylvan features, and by giving them a better opportunity than they could otherwise obtain, brings about a higher beauty of development and more perfect expression than nature herself offers." The preface of the book is quite without pretence. "The love of country," says our author, with a gravity that overtops his years, "is inseparably connected with the love of home. Whatever, therefore, leads man to assemble the comforts and elegancies of life around his habitation, tends to increase local attachments, and render domestic life more delightful; thus, not only augmenting his own enjoyment, but strengthening his patriotism, and making him a better citizen. And there is no employment or recreation which affords the mind greater or more permanent satisfaction than that of cultivating the earth and adorning our own property. 'God Almighty first planted a garden; and, indeed, it is the parent of human pleasures,' says Lord Bacon. And as the first man was shut out from the garden, in the cultivation of which no alloy was mixed with his happiness, the desire to return to it seems to be implanted by nature, more or less strongly, in every heart."

This book passed to instant popularity, and became a classic, invaluable to the thousands in every part of the country who were waiting for the master-word which should tell them what to do to make their homes as beautiful as they wished. Its fine scholarship in the literature and history of rural art; its singular dexterity in stating the great principles of taste, and their application to actual circumstances, with a clearness that satisfied the dullest mind; its

genial grace of style, illuminated by the sense of that beauty which it was its aim to indicate, and with a cheerfulness which is one of the marked characteristics of Downing as an author; the easy mastery of the subject, and its intrinsic interest; — all these combined to secure to the book the position it has always occupied. The testimony of the men most competent to speak with authority in the matter was grateful, because deserved, praise. Loudon, the editor of "Repton's Landscape Gardening," and perhaps at the time the greatest living critic in the department of rural art, at once declared it "a masterly work;" and after quoting freely from its pages, remarked: "We have quoted largely from this work, because in so doing we think we shall give a just idea of the great merit of the author." Dr. Lindley, also, in his "Gardener's Chronicle," dissented from "some minor points," but said: "On the whole, we know of no work in which the fundamental principles of this profession are so well or so concisely expressed:" adding, "No English landscape gardener has written so clearly, or with so much real intensity."

The "quiet, thoughtful, and reserved boy" of the Montgomery Academy had thus suddenly displayed the talent which was not suspected by his school-fellows. The younger partner had now justified the expectation he aroused; and the long, silent, careful years of study and experience insured the permanent value of the results he announced. The following year saw the publication of the "Cottage Residences," in which the principles of the first volume were applied in detail. For the same reason it achieved a success similar to the "Landscape Gardening." Rural England recognized its great value. Loudon said: "It cannot fail to be of great service." Another said: "We stretch our arm across the 'big water' to tender our Yankee coadjutor an English shake and a cordial recognition." These welcomes from those who knew what and why they welcomed, founded Downing's authority in the minds of the less learned, while the simplicity of his own statements confirmed it. From the publication of the "Landscape Gardening" until his death, he continued to be the chief American authority in rural art.

European honors soon began to seek the young gardener upon the Hudson. He had been for some time in correspondence with Loudon, and the other eminent men of the profession. He was now elected corresponding member of the Royal Botanic Society of London, of the Horticultural Societies of Berlin, the Low Countries, etc. Queen Anne of Denmark sent him "a magnificent ring," in acknowledgment of her pleasure in his works. But, as the years slowly passed, a sweeter praise saluted him than the Queen's ring, namely, the gradual improvement of the national rural taste, and the universal testimony that it was due to Downing. It was found as easy to live in a handsome house as in one that shocked all sense of propriety and beauty. The capabilities of the landscape began to develop themselves to the man who looked at it from his windows, with Downing's books in his hand. Mr. Wilder says that a gentleman "who is eminently qualified to form an enlightened judgment," declared that much of the improvement that has taken place in this country during the last twelve years, in rural architecture and in ornamental gardening and planting, may be ascribed to him. Another gentleman, "speaking of suburban cottages in the West," says: "I asked the origin of so much taste, and was told it might principally be traced to 'Downing's Cottage Residences' and the 'Horticulturist.'" He was naturally elected an honorary member of most of the Horticultural Societies in the country; and as his interest in rural life was universal, embracing no less the soil and cultivation, than the plant, and flower, and fruit, with the residence of the cultivator, he received the same honor from the Agricultural Associations.

Meanwhile his studies were unremitting; and in 1845 Wiley & Putnam published in New York and London "The Fruits and Fruit Trees of America," a volume of six hundred pages. The duodecimo edition had only lineal drawings. The large octavo was illustrated with finely colored plates, executed in Paris, from drawings made in this country from the original fruits. It is a masterly resumé of the results of American experience in the history, character, and growth

of fruit, to the date of its publication. The fourteenth edition was published in the year 1852.

It was in May of the year 1846 that I first saw Downing. A party was made up under the locusts to cross the river and pass the day at "Highland Gardens," as his place was named. The river at Newburgh is about a mile wide, and is crossed by a quiet country ferry, whence the view downward toward the West Point Highlands, Butter Hill, Sugar-Loaf, Cro' Nest, and Skunnymunk, is as beautiful a river view as can be seen upon a summer day. It was a merry party which crossed, that bright May morning, and broke, with ringing laughter, the silence of the river. Most of us were newly escaped from the city, where we had been blockaded by the winter for many months, and although often tempted by the warm days that came in March, opening the windows on Broadway and ranging the blossoming plants in them, to believe that summer had fairly arrived, we had uniformly found the spring to be that laughing lie which the poets insist it is not. There was no doubt longer, however. The country was so brilliant with the tender green that it seemed festally adorned, and it was easy enough to believe that human genius could have no lovelier nor loftier task than the development of these colors, and forms, and opportunities, into their greatest use and adaptation to human life. "God Almighty first planted a garden, and, indeed, it is the first of human pleasures." Lord Bacon said it long ago, and the bright May morning echoed it, as we crossed the river.

I had read Downing's books; and they had given me the impression, naturally formed of one who truly said of himself, "Angry volumes of politics have we written none: but peaceful books, humbly aiming to weave something more into the fair garland of the beautiful and useful that encircles this excellent old earth."

His image in my mind was idyllic. I looked upon him as a kind of pastoral poet. I had fancied a simple, abstracted cultivator, gentle and silent. We left the boat and drove to his house. The open gate admitted us to a smooth avenue. We had glimpses of an arbor-vitæ hedge, — a small

and exquisite lawn — rare and flowering trees, and bushes beyond — a lustrous and odorous thicket — a gleam of the river below — “a feeling” of the mountains across the river — and were at the same moment alighting at the door of the elegant mansion, in which stood, what appeared to me a tall, slight Spanish gentleman, with thick black hair worn very long, and dark eyes fixed upon me with a searching glance. He was dressed simply in a costume fitted for the morning hospitalities of his house, or for the study, or the garden. His welcoming smile was reserved, but genuine, — his manner singularly hearty and quiet, marked by the easy elegance and perfect *savoir faire* which would have adorned the Escorial. We passed into the library. The bookshelves were let into the wall, and the doors covered with glass. They occupied only part of the walls, and upon the space above each was a bracket with busts of Dante, Milton, Petrarch, Franklin, Linnæus, and Scott. There was a large bay window opposite the fireplace. The forms and colors of this room were delightful. It was the retreat of an elegantly cultivated gentleman. There were no signs of work except a writing-table, with pens, and portfolios, and piles of letters.

Here we sat and conversed. Our host entered into every subject gayly and familiarly, with an appreciating deference to differences of opinion, and an evident tenacity of his own, all the while, which surprised me, as the peculiarity of the most accomplished man of the world. There was a certain aristocratic *hauteur* in his manner, a constant sense of personal dignity, which comported with the reserve of his smile and the quiet welcome. His intellectual attitude seemed to be one of curious criticism, as if he were sharply scrutinizing all that his affability of manner drew forth. No one had a readier generosity of acknowledgment, and there was a negative flattery in his address and attention, which was very subtle and attractive. In all allusions to rural affairs, and matters with which he was entirely familiar, his conversation was not in the slightest degree pedantic, nor positive. He spoke of such things with the simplicity of a child talking of

his toys. The workman, the author, the artist were entirely subjugated in him to the gentleman. That was his favorite idea. The *gentleman* was the full flower, of which all the others were suggestions and parts. The *gentleman* is, to the various powers and cultivations of the man, what the tone is to the picture, which lies in no single color, but in the harmony of the whole. The gentleman is the final bloom of the man. But no man could be a gentleman without original nobleness of feeling and genuineness of character. Gentleness was developed from that by experience and study, as the delicate tinge upon precious fruits, by propitious circumstances and healthy growth.

In this feeling, which was a constituent of his character, lay the secret of the appearance of *hauteur* that was so often remarked in him, to which Miss Bremer alludes, and which all his friends perceived, more or less distinctly. Its origin was, doubtless, twofold. It sprang first from his exquisite mental organization, which instinctively shrunk from whatever was coarse or crude, and which made his artistic taste so true and fine. That easily extended itself to demand the finest results of men, as of trees, and fruits, and flowers; and then committed the natural error of often accepting the appearance of this result, where the fact was wanting. Hence he had a natural fondness for the highest circles of society — a fondness as deeply founded as his love of the best possible fruits. His social tendency was constantly toward those to whom great wealth had given opportunity of that ameliorating culture, — of surrounding beautiful homes with beautiful grounds, and filling them with refined and beautiful persons, which is the happy fortune of few. Hence, also, the fact that his introduction to Mr. Murray was a remembered event, because the mind of the boy instantly recognized that society to which, by affinity, he belonged; and hence, also, that admiration of the character and the life of the English gentleman, which was life-long with him, and which made him, when he went to England, naturally and directly at home among them. From this, also, came his extreme fondness for music, although he had

very little ear; and often when his wife read to him any peculiarly beautiful or touching passage from a book, he was quite unable to speak, so much was he mastered by his emotion. Besides this delicacy of organization, which makes aristocrats of all who have it, the sharp contrast between his childhood and his mature life doubtlessly nourished a kind of mental protest against the hard discomforts, want of sympathy, and misunderstandings of poverty.

I recall but one place in which he deliberately states this instinct of his, as an opinion. In the paper upon "Improvement of Vegetable Races," April, 1852, he says: "We are not going to be led into a physiological digression on the subject of the inextinguishable rights of a superior organization in certain men, and races of men, which Nature every day reaffirms, notwithstanding the socialistic and democratic theories of our politicians." But this statement only asserts the difference of organization. No man was a truer American than Downing; no man more opposed to all kinds of recognition of that difference in intellectual organization by a difference of social rank. That he considered to be the true democracy which asserted the absolute equality of opportunity;—and, therefore, he writes from Warwick Castle, a place which in every way could charm no man more than him: "but I turned my face at last westward toward my native land, and with uplifted eyes thanked the good God that, though to England, the country of my ancestors, it had been given to show the growth of man in his highest development of class or noble, to America has been reserved the greater blessing of solving for the world the true problem of all humanity, — that of the abolition of all castes, and the recognition of the divine rights of every human soul." On that May morning, in the library, I remember the conversation, drifting from subject to subject, touched an essay upon "Manners," by Mr. Emerson, then recently published; and in the few words that Mr. Downing said, lay the germ of what I gradually discovered to be his feeling upon the subject. This *hauteur* was always evident in his personal intercourse. In his dealings with workmen, with publishers,



with men of affairs of all kinds, the same feeling, which they called "stiffness," "coldness," "pride," "haughtiness," or "reserve," revealed itself. That first morning it only heightened in my mind the Spanish impression of the dark, slim man, who so courteously welcomed us at his door.

It was May, and the magnolias were in blossom. Under our host's guidance, we strolled about his grounds, which, although they comprised but some five acres, were laid out in a large style, that greatly enhanced their apparent extent. The town lay at the bottom of the hill, between the garden and the water, and there was a road just at the foot of the garden. But so skilfully were the trees arranged, that all suspicion of town or road was removed. Lying upon the lawn, standing in the door, or sitting under the light piazza before the parlor windows, the enchanted visitor saw only the garden ending in the thicket, which was so dexterously trimmed as to reveal the loveliest glimpses of the river, each a picture in its frame of foliage, but which was not cut low enough to betray the presence of road or town. You fancied the estate extended to the river; yes, and probably owned the river as an ornament, and included the mountains beyond. At least, you felt that here was a man who knew that the best part of the landscape could not be owned, but belonged to every one who could appropriate it. The thicket seemed not only to conceal, but to annihilate, the town. So sequestered and satisfied was the guest of that garden, that he was quite careless and incurious of the world beyond. I have often passed a week there without wishing to go outside the gate, and entirely forgot that there was any town near by. Sometimes, at sunset or twilight, we stepped into a light wagon, and turning up the hill, as we came out of the grounds, left Newburgh below, and drove along roads hanging over the river, or, passing Washington's Headquarters, trotted leisurely along the shore.

Within his house it was easy to understand that the home was so much the subject of his thought. Why did he wish that the landscape should be lovely, and the houses graceful and beautiful, and the fruit fine, and the flowers perfect, but

because these were all dependencies and ornaments of home, and home was the sanctuary of the highest human affection. This was the point of departure of his philosophy. Nature must serve man. The landscape must be made a picture in the gallery of love. Home was the pivot upon which turned all his theories of rural art. All his efforts, all the grasp of genius, and the cunning of talent, were to complete, in a perfect home, the apotheosis of love. It is in this fact that the permanence of his influence is rooted. His works are not the result of elegant taste, and generous cultivation, and a clear intellect, only; but of a noble hope that inspired taste, cultivation, and intellect. This saved him as an author from being wrecked upon formulas. He was strictly scientific, few men in his department more so; but he was never rigidly academical. He always discerned the thing signified through the expression; and, in his own art, insisted that if there was nothing to say, nothing should be said. He knew perfectly well that there is a time for discords, and a place for departures from rule, and he understood them when they came, — which was peculiar and very lovely in a man of so delicate a nervous organization. This led him to be tolerant of all differences of opinion and action, and to be sensitively wary of injuring the feelings of those from whom he differed. He was thus scientific in the true sense. In his department he was wise, and we find him writing from Warwick Castle again, thus: "Whoever designed this front, made up as it is of lofty towers and irregular walls, must have been a poet as well as architect, for its composition and details struck me as having the proportions and congruity of a fine scene in nature, which we feel is not to be measured and defined by the ordinary rules of art."

His own home was his finest work. It was materially beautiful, and spiritually bright with the purest lights of affection. Its hospitality was gracious and graceful. It consulted the taste, wishes, and habits of the guest, but with unobtrusiveness, that the favorite flower every morning by the plate upon the breakfast-table, seemed to have come there as naturally, in the family arrangements, as the plate

itself. He held his house as the steward of his friends. His social genius never suffered a moment to drag wearily by. No man was so necessarily devoted to his own affairs, — no host ever seemed so devoted to his guests. Those guests were of the most agreeable kind, or, at least, they seemed so in that house. Perhaps the interpreter of the House Beautiful, she who — in the poet's natural order — was as "moonlight unto sunlight," was the universal solvent. By day, there were always books, conversation, driving, working, lying on the lawn, excursions into the mountains across the river, visits to beautiful neighboring places, boating, botanizing, painting, — or whatever else could be done in the country, and done in the pleasantest way. At evening, there was music, — fine playing and singing, for the guest was thrice welcome who was musical, and the musical were triply musical there, — dancing, charades, games of every kind, — never suffered to flag, always delicately directed, — and in due season some slight violation of the Maine Law. Mr. Downing liked the Ohio wines, with which his friend, Mr. Longworth, kept him supplied, and of which he said, with his calm good sense, in the "*Horticulturist*," August, 1850, — "We do not mean to say that men could not live and breathe just as well if there were no such thing as wine known; but that since the time of Noah men will not be contented with merely living and breathing; and it is therefore better to provide them with proper and wholesome food and drink, than to put improper aliments within their reach." Charades were a favorite diversion, in which several of his most frequent guests excelled. He was always ready to take part, but his reserve and self-consciousness interfered with his success. His social enjoyment was always quiet. He rarely laughed loud. He preferred rather to sit with a friend and watch the dance or the game from a corner, than to mingle in them. He wrote verses, but never showed them. They were chiefly rhyming letters, clever and graceful, to his wife, and her sisters, and some intimate friends, and to a little niece, of whom he was especially fond. One evening, after vainly endeavoring to persuade a friend that

he was mistaken in the kind of a fruit, he sent him the following characteristic lines:

“TO THE DOCTOR, ON HIS PASSION FOR THE ‘DUCHESS OF  
OLDENBURGH.’”

“Dear Doctor, I write you this little effusion,  
On learning you’re still in that fatal delusion  
Of thinking the object you love is a Duchess,  
When ’tis only a milkmaid you hold in your clutches;  
Why, ’tis certainly plain as the spots in the sun,  
That the creature is only a fine *Dutch Mignonne*.  
She is *Dutch* — there is surely no question of that, —  
She’s so large and so ruddy — so plump and so fat;  
And that she’s a *Mignonne* — a beauty — most moving,  
Is equally proved by your desperate loving;  
But that she’s a Duchess I flatly deny,  
There’s such a broad twinkle about her deep eye;  
And glance at the russety hue of her skin —  
A lady — a noble — would think it a sin!  
Ah no, my dear Doctor, upon my own honor,  
I must send you a dose of the *true Bella donna!*”

I had expressed great delight with the magnolia, and carried one of the flowers in my hand during our morning stroll. At evening he handed me a fresh one, and every day while I remained, the breakfast-room was perfumed by the magnolia that was placed beside my plate. This delicate thoughtfulness was universal with him. He knew all the flowers that his friends especially loved; and in his notes to me he often wrote, “the magnolias are waiting for you,” as an irresistible allurements — which it was very apt to prove. Downing was in the library when I came down the morning after our arrival. He had the air of a man who has been broad awake and at work for several hours. There was the same quiet greeting as before — a gay conversation, glancing at a thousand things — and breakfast. After breakfast he disappeared; but if, at any time, an excursion was proposed, — to climb some hill, to explore some meadows rich in rhododendron, to visit some lovely lake, — he was quite ready, and went with the same unhurried air that marked all his actions. Like Sir Walter Scott, he was pro-

ducing results implying close application and labor, but without any apparent expense of time or means. His step was so leisurely, his manner so composed, there was always such total absence of weariness in all he said and did, that it was impossible to believe he was so diligent a worker.

But this composure, this reticence, this leisurely air, were all imposed upon his manner by his regal will. He was under the most supreme self-control. It was so absolute as to deprive him of spontaneity and enthusiasm. In social intercourse he was like two persons: the one conversed with you pleasantly upon every topic, the other watched you from behind that pleasant talk, like a sentinel. The delicate child, left much to himself by his parents, naturally grew wayward and imperious. But the man of shrewd common sense, with his way to make in the world, saw clearly that that waywardness must be sternly subjugated. It was so, and at the usual expense. What the friend of Downing most desired in him was a frank and unreserved flow of feeling, which should drown out that curious, critical self-consciousness. He felt this want as much as any one, and often playfully endeavored to supply it. It doubtless arose, in great part, from too fine a nervous organization. Under the mask of the finished man of the world he concealed the most feminine feelings, which often expressed themselves with pathetic intensity to the only one in whom he unreservedly confided.

This critical reserve behind the cordial manner invested his whole character with mystery. The long dark hair, the firm dark eyes, the slightly defiant brow, the Spanish mien, that welcomed us that May morning, seemed to me always afterward, the symbols of his character. A cloud wrapped his inner life. Motives, and the deeper feelings, were lost to view in that obscurity. It seemed that within this cloud there might be desperate struggles, like the battle of the Huns and Romans, invisible in the air, but of which no token escaped into the experience of his friends. He confronted circumstances with the same composed and indomitable resolution, and it was not possible to tell whether he were

entertaining angels, or wrestling with demons, in the secret chambers of his soul. There are passages in letters to his wife which indicate, and they only by implication, that his character was tried and tempered by struggles. Those most intimate letters, however, are full of expressions of religious faith and dependence, sometimes uttered with a kind of clinging earnestness, as if he well knew the value of the peace that passes understanding. But nothing of all this appeared in his friendly intercourse with men. He had, however, very few intimate friends among men. His warmest and most confiding friendships were with women. In his intercourse with them, he revealed a rare and beautiful sense of the uses of friendship, which united him very closely to them. To men he was much more inaccessible. It cannot be denied that the feeling of mystery in his character affected the impression he made upon various persons. It might be called as before, "haughtiness," "reserve," "coldness," or "hardness," but it was quite the same thing. It repelled many who were otherwise most strongly attracted to him by his books. In others, still, it begot a slight distrust, and suspicion of self-seeking upon his part.

I remember a little circumstance, the impression of which is strictly in accordance with my feeling of this singular mystery in his character. We had one day been sitting in the library, and he had told me his intention of building a little study and working-room, adjoining the house: "but I don't know," he said, "where or how to connect it with the house." But I was very well convinced that he would arrange it in the best possible manner, and was not surprised when he afterward wrote me that he had made a door through the wall of the library into the new building. This door occupied just the space of one of the book-cases let into the wall, and, by retaining the double doors of the book-case precisely as they were, and putting false books behind the glass of the doors, the appearance of the library was entirely unaltered, while the whole apparent book-case, doors and all, swung to and fro, at his will, as a private door. During my next visit at his house, I was sitting very late at night in

the library, with a single candle, thinking that every one had long since retired, and having quite forgotten in the perfectly familiar appearance of the room, that the little change had been made, when suddenly one of the book-cases flew out of the wall, turning upon noiseless hinges, and, out of the perfect darkness behind, Downing darted into the room, while I sat staring like a benighted guest in the Castle of Otranto. The moment, the place, and the circumstance, were entirely harmonious with my impression of the man.

Thus, although, upon the bright May morning, I had crossed the river to see a man of transparent and simple nature, a lover and poet of rural beauty, a man who had travelled little, who had made his own way into polished and cultivated social relations, as he did into everything which he mastered, being altogether a self-made man—I found the courteous and accomplished gentleman, the quiet man of the world, full of tact and easy dignity, in whom it was easy to discover that lover and poet, though not in the form anticipated. His exquisite regard for the details of life, gave a completeness to his household, which is nowhere surpassed. Fitness is the first element of beauty, and every thing in his arrangement was appropriate. It was hard not to sigh, when contemplating the beautiful results he accomplished by taste and tact, and at comparatively little pecuniary expense, to think of the sums elsewhere squandered upon an insufficient and shallow splendor. Yet, as beauty was, with Downing, life, and not luxury, although he was, in feeling and by actual profession, the Priest of Beauty, he was never a Sybarite, never sentimental, never weakened by the service. In the dispositions of most men devoted to beauty, as artists and poets, there is a vein of languor, a leaning to luxury, of which no trace was even visible in him. His habits of life were singularly regular. He used no tobacco, drank little wine, and was no gourmand. But he was no ascetic. He loved to entertain Sybarites, poets, and the lovers of luxury: doubtless from a consciousness that he had the magic of pleasing them more than they had ever been pleased. He enjoyed the pleasure

of his guests. The various play of different characters entertained him. Yet with all his fondness for fine places, he justly estimated the tendency of their influence. He was not enthusiastic, he was not seduced into blindness by his own preferences, but he maintained that cool and accurate estimate of things and tendencies which always made his advice invaluable. Is there any truer account of the syren influence of a superb and extensive country-seat than the following from the paper: "A Visit to Montgomery Place." "It is not, we are sure, the spot for a man to plan campaigns of conquest, and we doubt, even, whether the scholar whose ambition it is

"to scorn delights,  
And live laborious days,"

would not find something in the air of this demesne so soothing as to dampen the fire of his great purposes, and dispose him to believe that there is more dignity in repose, than merit in action."

So, certainly, I believe, as the May days passed, and found me still lingering in the enchanted garden.

In August, 1846, "The Horticulturist" was commenced by Mr. Luther Tucker, of Albany, who invited Mr. Downing to become the editor, in which position he remained, writing a monthly leader for it, until his death. These articles are contained in the present volume. Literature offers no more charming rural essays. They are the thoughtful talk of a country gentleman, and scholar, and practical workman, upon the rural aspects and interests of every month in the year. They insinuate instruction, rather than directly teach, and in a style mellow, mature, and cheerful, adapted to every age and every mood. By their variety of topic and treatment, they are, perhaps, the most complete memorial of the man. Their genial simplicity fascinated all kinds of persons. A correspondence which might be called affectionate, sprang up between the editor and scores of his readers. They wanted instruction and advice. They confided to him their plans and hopes; to him — the personally



unknown "we" of their monthly magazine — the reserved man whom publishers and others found "stiff," and "cold," and "a little haughty," and whose fine points of character stood out, like sunny mountain peaks against a mist. These letters, it appears, were personal, and full of feeling. The writers wished to know the man, to see his portrait, and many requested him to have it published in the "*Horticulturist*." When in his neighborhood, these correspondents came to visit him. They were anxious "to see the man who had written books which had enabled them to make their houses beautiful, — which had helped their wives in the flower-garden, and had shown them how, with little expense, to decorate their humble parlors, and add a grace to the barrenness of daily life." All this was better than Queen Anne's "magnificent ring."

Meanwhile, business in the nursery looked a little threatening. Money was always dropping from the hospitable hand of the owner. Expenses increased — affairs became complicated. It is not the genius of men like Downing to manage the finances very skilfully. "Every tree that he sold for a dollar, cost him ten shillings;" — which is not a money-making process. He was perhaps too lavish, too careless, too sanguine. "Had his income been a million a minute, he would always have been in debt," says one who knew him well. The composed manner was as unruffled as ever; the regal will preserved the usual appearance of things, but in the winter of 1846-7 Mr. Downing was seriously embarrassed. It was a very grave juncture, for it was likely that he would be obliged to leave his house and begin life again. But his friends rallied to the rescue. They assured to him his house and grounds; and he, without losing time, without repining, and with the old determination, went to work more industriously than ever. His attention was unremitting to the "*Horticulturist*," and to all the projects he had undertaken. His interest in the management of the nursery, however, decreased, and he devoted himself with more energy to rural architecture and landscape gardening, until he gradually discontinued altogether the

raising of trees for sale. His house was still the resort of the most brilliant society; still — as it always had been, and was, until the end — the seat of beautiful hospitality. He was often enough perplexed in his affairs — hurried by the monthly recurring necessity of “the leader,” and not quite satisfied at any time until that literary task was accomplished. His business confined and interested him; his large correspondence was promptly managed; but he was still sanguine, under that Spanish reserve, and still spent profusely. He had a thousand interests; a State agricultural school, a national agricultural bureau at Washington, designing private and public buildings, laying out large estates, pursuing his own scientific and literary studies, and preparing a work upon Rural Architecture. From his elegant home he was scattering, in the Horticulturist, pearl-seed of precious suggestion, which fell in all kinds of secluded and remote regions, and bore, and are bearing, costly fruit.

In 1849, Mr. John Wiley published “Hints to Young Architects, by George Wightwick, Architect; with Additional Notes and Hints to Persons about Building in this Country, by A. J. Downing.” It was a work preparatory to the original one he designed to publish, and full of most valuable suggestions. For in every thing he was American. His sharp sense of propriety as the primal element of beauty, led him constantly to insist that the place, and circumstances, and time, should always be carefully considered before any step was taken. The satin shoe was a grace in the parlor, but a deformity in the garden. The Parthenon was perfect in a certain climate, under certain conditions, and for certain purposes. But the Parthenon as a country mansion in the midst of American woods and fields was unhandsome and offensive. His aim in building a house was to adapt it to the site, and to the means and character of the owner.

It was in the autumn of 1849 that Frederika Bremer came to America. She had been for several years in intimate correspondence with Mr. Downing, and was closely attracted to him by a profound sympathy with his view of the dignity and influence of the home. He received Miss

Bremer upon her arrival, and she went with him to his house, where she staid several weeks, and wrote there the introduction to the authorized American edition of her works. It is well for us, perhaps, that as she has written a work upon "The Homes of the United States," she should have taken her first impression of them from that of Mr. Downing. During all her travels in this country she constantly corresponded with him and his wife, to whom she was very tenderly attached. Her letters were full of cheerful humor and shrewd observation. She went bravely about alone, and was treated, almost without exception, with consideration and courtesy. And after her journey was over, and she was about to return home, she came to say farewell where she had first greeted America, in Downing's garden.

In this year he finally resolved to devote himself entirely to architecture and building, and, in order to benefit by the largest variety of experience in elegant rural life, and to secure the services of an accomplished and able architect, thoroughly trained to the business he proposed, Mr. Downing went to England in the summer of 1850, having arranged with Messrs. D. Appleton & Co. for the publication of "The Architecture of Country Houses; including Designs for Cottages, Farm-houses, and Villas."

Already in correspondence with the leading Englishmen in his department, Mr. Downing was at once cordially welcomed. He showed the admirable, and not the unfriendly, qualities of his countrymen, and was directly engaged in a series of visits to the most extensive and remarkable of English country seats, where he was an honored guest. The delight of the position was beyond words to a man of his peculiar character and habits. He saw on every hand the perfection of elegant rural life, which was his ideal of life. He saw the boundless parks, the cultivated landscape, the tropics imprisoned in glass; he saw spacious Italian villas, more Italian than in Italy; every various triumph of park, garden, and country house. But with these, also, he met in the pleasantest way much fine

English society, which was his ideal of society. There was nothing wanting to gratify his fine and fastidious taste; but the passage already quoted from his letter at Warwick Castle shows how firmly his faith was set upon his native land, while his private letters are full of affectionate longing to return. It is easy to figure him moving with courtly grace through the rooms of palaces, gentle, respectful, low in tone, never exaggerating, welcome to lord and lady for his good sense, his practical knowledge, his exact detail; pleasing the English man and woman by his English sympathies, and interesting them by his manly and genuine, not boasting, assertions of American genius and success. Looking at the picture, one remembers again that earlier one of the boy coming home from Montgomery Academy, in Orange County, and introduced at the wealthy neighbor's to the English gentleman. The instinct that remembered so slight an event secured his appreciation of all that England offered. No American ever visited England with a mind more in tune with all that is nobly characteristic of her. He remarked, upon his return, that he had been much impressed by the quiet, religious life and habits which he found in many great English houses. It is not a point of English life often noticed, nor presupposed, but it was doubly grateful to him, because he was always a Christian believer, and because all parade was repugnant to him. His letters before his marriage, and during the last years of his life, evince the most genuine Christian faith and feeling.

His residence in England was very brief — a summer trip. He crossed to Paris and saw French life. Fortunately, as his time was short, he saw more in a day than most men in a month, because he was prepared to see, and knew where to look. He found the assistant he wished in Mr. Calvert Vaux, a young English architect, to whom he was introduced by the Secretary of the Architectural Association, and with whom, so mutual was the satisfaction, he directly concluded an agreement. Mr. Vaux sailed with him from Liverpool in September, presently became his partner in business, and

commanded, to the end, Mr. Downing's unreserved confidence and respect.

I remember a Christmas visit to Downing in 1850, after his return from Europe, when we all danced to a fiddle upon the marble pavement of the hall, by the light of rustic chandeliers wreathed with Christmas green, and under the antlers, and pikes, and helmets, and breastplates, and plumed hats of cavaliers, that hung upon the walls. The very genius of English Christmas ruled the revel.

During these years he was engaged in superintending the various new editions of his works, and looking forward to larger achievements with maturer years. He designed a greatly enlarged edition of the "Fruit-Trees," and spoke occasionally of the "Shade-Trees," as a work which would be of the greatest practical value. He was much interested in the establishment of the Pomological Congress, was chairman of its fruit committee from the beginning, and drew up the "Rules of American Pomology." Every moment had its work. There was not a more useful man in America; but his visitor found still the same quiet host, leisurely, disengaged; picking his favorite flowers before breakfast; driving here and there, writing, studying, as if rather for amusement; and at twilight stepping into the wagon for a loitering drive along the river.

His love of the country and faith in rural influences were too genuine for him not to be deeply interested in the improvement of cities by means of public parks and gardens. Not only for their sanitary use, but for their elegance and refining influence, he was anxious that all our cities should be richly endowed with them. He alluded frequently to the subject in the columns of his magazine, and when it was resolved by Congress to turn the public grounds in Washington, near the Capitol, White House, and Smithsonian Institute, into a public garden and promenade, Downing was naturally the man invited by the President, in April, 1851, to design the arrangement of the grounds and to superintend their execution. All the designs and much of the work were completed before his death. This new labor, added to the

rest, while it increased his income, consumed much of his time. He went once every month to Washington, and was absent ten or twelve days.

He was not suffered to be at peace in this position. There were plenty of jealousies and rivalries, and much sharp questioning about the \$2500 annually paid to an accomplished artist for laying out the public grounds of the American Capital, in a manner worthy the nation, and for reclaiming many acres from waste and the breeding of miasma. At length the matter was discussed in Congress. On the 24th March, 1852, during a debate upon various appropriations, Mr. Jones, of Tennessee, moved to strike out the sum of \$12,000, proposed to complete the improvements around the President's house; complained that there were great abuses under the proviso of this appropriation, and declared, quite directly, that Mr. Downing was overpaid for his services. Mr. Stanton, of Kentucky, replied:—"It is astonishing to my mind—and I have no doubt to the minds of others—with what facility otherwise intelligent and respectable gentlemen on this floor can deal out wholesale denunciations of men about whom they know nothing, and will not inform themselves; and how much the legislation of the country is controlled by prejudices thus invoked and clamor thus raised." After speaking of the bill under which the improvements were making, he continued: "The President was authorized to appoint some competent person to superintend the carrying out of the plan adopted. He appointed Mr. Downing. And who is he? One of the most accomplished gentlemen in his profession in the Union; a man known to the world as possessing rare skill as a 'rural architect' and landscape gardener, as well as a man of great scientific intelligence. \* \* \* \* I deny that he has neglected his duties, as the gentleman from Tennessee has charged. Instead of being here only three days in the month, he has been here vigilantly discharging his duties at all times when those duties required him to be here. He has superintended, directed, and carried out the plan adopted, as fully as the funds appropriated have enabled him to do. If all

the officers of the Government had been as conscientious and scrupulous in the discharge of their duties as he has been since his appointment, there would be no ground for reproaches against those who have control of the Government."

Mr. Downing was annoyed by this continual carping and bickering, and anxious to have the matter definitely arranged, he requested the President to summon the Cabinet. The Secretaries assembled, and Mr. Downing was presented. He explained the case as he understood it, unrolled his plans, stated his duties, and the time he devoted to them, and the salary he received. He then added, that he wished the arrangement to be clearly understood. If the President and Cabinet thought that his requirements were extravagant, he was perfectly willing to roll up his plans, and return home. If they approved them, he would gladly remain, but upon the express condition that he was to be relieved from the annoyances of the quarrel. The President and Cabinet agreed that his plans were the best, and his demands reasonable; and the work went on in peace from that time.

The year 1852 opened upon Downing, in the garden where he had played and dreamed alone, while the father tended the trees; and to which he had clung, with indefeasible instinct, when the busy mother had suggested that her delicate boy would thrive better as a drygoods clerk. He was just past his thirty-sixth birthday, and the Fishkill mountains, that had watched the boy departing for the academy where he was to show no sign of his power, now beheld him, in the bloom of manhood, honored at home and abroad — no man, in fact, more honored at home than he. Yet the honor sprang from the work that had been achieved in that garden. It was there he had thought, and studied, and observed. It was to that home he returned from his little excursions, to ponder upon the new things he had seen and heard, to try them by the immutable principles of taste, and to test them by rigorous proofs. It was from that home that he looked upon the landscape which, as it allured his youth, now satisfied his manhood. The mountains, upon whose shoreward slope his wife was born under the blossom-

ing locusts on the very day on which he was born in the Newburgh garden, smiled upon his success and shared it. He owed them a debt he never disavowed. Below his house flowed the river of which he so proudly wrote in the preface to the "Fruit-Trees" — "A man born on the banks of one of the noblest and most fruitful rivers in America, and whose best days have been spent in gardens and orchards, may perhaps be pardoned for talking about fruit-trees." Over the gleaming bay which the river's expansion at Newburgh forms, glided the dazzling summer days; or the black thunder-gusts swept suddenly out from the bold highlands of West Point; or the winter landscape lay calm around the garden. From his windows he saw all the changing glory of the year. New York was of easy access by the steamers that constantly passed to and from Albany and the river towns, and the railroad brought the city within three hours of his door. It brought constant visitors also, from the city and beyond; and scattered up and down the banks of the Hudson were the beautiful homes of friends, with whom he was constantly in the exchange of the most unrestrained hospitality. He added to his house the working-room communicating with the library by the mysterious door, and was deeply engaged in the planning and building of country-houses in every direction. Among these I may mention, as among the last and finest, the summer residence of Daniel Parish, Esq., at Newport, R. I. Mr. Downing knew that Newport was the great social exchange of the country, that men of wealth and taste yearly assembled there, and that a fine house of his designing erected there would be of the greatest service to his art. This house is at once simple, massive, and graceful, as becomes the spot. It is the work of an artist, in the finest sense, harmonious with the bare cliff and the sea. But even where his personal services were not required, his books were educating taste, and his influence was visible in hundreds of houses that he had never seen. He edited, during this year, Mrs. Loudon's "Gardening for Ladies," which was published by Mr. John Wiley. No man was a more practically useful friend to



thousands who did not know him. Yet if, at any time, while his house was full of visitors, business summoned him, as it frequently did, he slipped quietly out of the gate, left the visitors to a care as thoughtful and beautiful as his own, and his house was made their home for the time they chose to remain. Downing was in his thirty-seventh year, in the fulness of his fame and power. The difficulties of the failure were gradually disappearing behind him like clouds rolling away. He stood in his golden prime, as in his summer garden; the Future smiled upon him like the blue Fishkill hills beyond the river. That Future, also, lay beyond the river.

At the end of June, 1852, I went to pass a few days with him. He held an annual feast of roses with as many friends as he could gather and his house could hold. The days of my visit had all the fresh sweetness of early summer, and the garden and the landscape were fuller than ever of grace and beauty. It was an Arcadian chapter, with the roses and blossoming figs upon the green-house wall, and the music by moonlight, and reading of songs, and tales, and games upon the lawn, under the Warwick vase. Boccaccio's groups in their Fiesole garden, were not gayer; nor the blithe circle of a summer's day upon Sir Walter Vivian's lawn. Indeed it was precisely in Downing's garden that the poetry of such old traditions became fact — or rather the fact was lifted into that old poetry. He had achieved in it the beauty of an extreme civilization, without losing the natural, healthy vigor of his country and time.

One evening — the moon was full — we crossed in a row-boat to the Fishkill shore, and floated upon the gleaming river under the black banks of foliage to a quaint old country house, in whose small library the Society of the Cincinnati was formed, at the close of the Revolution, and in whose rooms a pleasant party was gathered that summer evening. The doors and windows were open. We stood in the rooms or loitered upon the piazza, looking into the unspeakable beauty of the night. A lady was pointed out to me as the heroine of a romantic history — a handsome woman, with the traces of hard experience in her face, standing in that

little peaceful spot of summer moonlight, as a child snatching a brief dream of peace between spasms of mortal agony. As we returned at midnight across the river, Downing told us more of the stranger lady, and of his early feats of swimming from Newburgh to Fishkill; and so we drifted homeward upon the oily calm with talk, and song, and silence — a brief, beautiful voyage upon the water, where the same summer, while yet unfaded should see him embarked upon a longer journey. In these last days he was the same generous, thoughtful, quiet, effective person I had always found him. Friends peculiarly dear to him were in his house. The Washington work was advancing finely: he was much interested in his Newport plans, and we looked forward to a gay meeting there in the later summer. The time for his monthly trip to Washington arrived while I was still his guest. "We shall meet in Newport," I said. "Yes," he answered, "but you must stay and keep house with my wife until I return."

I was gone before he reached home again, but, with many who wished to consult him about houses they were building, and with many whom he honored and wished to know, awaited his promised visit at Newport.

Mr. Downing had intended to leave Newburgh with his wife upon Tuesday, the 27th of July, when they would have taken one of the large river steamers for New York. But his business prevented his leaving upon that day, and it was postponed to Wednesday, the 28th of July, on which day only the two smaller boats, the "Henry Clay" and the "Armenia" were running. Upon reaching the wharf, Mr. and Mrs. Downing met her mother, Mrs. De Wint, with her youngest son and daughter, and the lady who had been pointed out as the heroine of a tragedy. But this morning she was as sunny as the day, which was one of the loveliest of summer.

The two steamers were already in sight, coming down the river, and there was a little discussion in the party as to which they would take. But the "Henry Clay" was the largest and reached the wharf first. Mr. Downing and

his party embarked, and soon perceived that the two boats were desperately racing. The circumstance was, however, too common to excite any apprehension in the minds of the party, or even to occasion remark. They sat upon the deck enjoying the graceful shores that fled by them — a picture on the air. Mr. Downing was engaged in lively talk with his companion, who had never been to Newport and was very curious to see and share its brilliant life. They had dined, and the boat was within twenty miles of New York, in a broad reach of the river between the Palisades and the town of Yonkers, when Mrs. Downing observed a slight smoke blowing toward them from the centre of the boat. She spoke of it, rose, and said they had better go into the cabin. Her husband replied, no, that they were as safe where they then were as anywhere. Mrs. Downing, however, went into the cabin where her mother was sitting, knitting, with her daughter by her side. There was little time to say anything. The smoke rapidly increased; all who could reach it hurried into the cabin. The thickening smoke poured in after the crowd, who were nearly suffocated.

The dense mass choked the door, and Mr. Downing's party instinctively rushed to the cabin windows to escape. They climbed through them to the narrow passage between the cabin and the bulwarks of the boat, the crowd pressing heavily, shouting, crying, despairing, and suffocating in the smoke that now fell upon them in black clouds. Suddenly Mr. Downing said, "They are running her ashore, and we shall all be taken off." He led them round to the stern of the boat, thinking to escape more readily from the other side, but there saw a person upon the shore waving them back, so they returned to their former place. The flames began now to crackle and roar as they crept along the woodwork from the boiler, and the pressure of the throng toward the stern was frightful. Mr. Downing was seen by his wife to step upon the railing, with his coat tightly buttoned, ready for a spring upon the upper deck. At that moment she was borne away by the crowd and saw him no more. Their friend, who had been conversing with Mr. Downing, was

calm but pale with alarm. "What will become of us?" said one of these women, in this frightful extremity of peril, as they held each other's hands and were removed from all human help. "May God have mercy upon us," answered the other.

Upon the instant they were separated by the swaying crowd, but Mrs. Downing still kept near her mother, and sister, and brother. The flames were now within three yards of them, and her brother said, "We must get overboard." Yet she still held some books and a parasol in her hand, not yet able to believe that this was Death creeping along the deck. She turned and looked for her husband. She could not see him and called his name. Her voice was lost in that wild whirl and chaos of frenzied despair, and her brother again said to her, "You must get overboard." In that moment the daughter looked upon the mother—the mother, who had said to her daughter's husband when he asked her hand, "She has been the comfort of her mother's heart, and the solace of her hours," and she saw that her mother's face was "full of the terrible reality and inevitable necessity" that awaited them. The crowd choked them, the flames darted toward them; the brother helped them upon the railing and they leaped into the water.

Mrs. Downing stretched out her hands, and grasped two chairs that floated near her, and lying quietly upon her back, was buoyed up by the chairs; then seizing another that was passing her, and holding two in one hand and one in the other, she floated away from the smoking and blazing wreck, from the shrieking and drowning crowd, past the stern of the boat that lay head in to the shore, past the blackened fragments, away from the roaring death struggle into the calm water of the river, calling upon God to save her. She could see the burning boat below her, three hundred yards, perhaps, but the tide was coming in, and after floating some little distance up the river a current turned her directly toward the shore. Where the water was yet too deep for her to stand, she was grasped by a

man, drawn toward the bank, and there, finding that she could stand, she was led out of the water by two men. With the rest of the bewildered, horror-stunned people, she walked up and down the margin of the river looking for her husband. Her brother and sister met her as she walked here — a meeting more sad than joyful. Still the husband did not come, nor the mother, nor that friend who had implored the mercy of God. Mrs. Downing was sure that her husband was safe. He had come ashore above — he was still floating somewhere — he had been picked up — he had swam out to some sloop in the river — he was busy rescuing the drowning — he was doing his duty somewhere — he could not be lost.

She was persuaded into a little house, where she sat at a window until nightfall, watching the wreck and the confusion. Then she was taken home upon the railroad. The neighbors and friends came to her to pass the night. They sat partly in the house and partly stood watching at the door and upon the piazza, waiting for news from the messengers who came constantly from the wreck. Mr. Vaux and others left directly for the wreck, and remained there until the end. The wife clung to her hope, but lay very ill, in the care of the physician. The day dawned over that blighted garden, and in the afternoon they told her that the body of her husband had been found, and they were bringing it home. A young woman who had been saved from the wreck and sat trembling in the house, then said what until then it had been impossible for her to say, that, at the last moment, Mr. Downing had told her how to sustain herself in the water, but that before she was compelled to leap, she saw him struggling in the river with his friend and others clinging to him. Then she heard him utter a prayer to God, and saw him no more. Another had seen him upon the upper deck, probably just after his wife lost sight of him, throwing chairs into the river to serve as supports; nor is it too improbable that the chairs upon which his wife floated to shore were among those he had so thoughtfully provided.

In the afternoon, they brought him home, and laid him in his library. A terrific storm burst over the river and crashed among the hills, and the wild sympathy of nature surrounded that blasted home. But its master lay serene in the peace of the last prayer he uttered. Loving hands had woven garlands of the fragrant blossoms of the Cape jessamine, the sweet clematis, and the royal roses he loved so well. The next morning was calm and bright, and he was laid in the graveyard, where his father and mother lie. The quiet Fishkill mountains, that won the love of the shy boy in the garden, now watch the grave of the man, who was buried, not yet thirty-seven years old, but with great duties done in this world, and with firm faith in the divine goodness.

“Unwatch’d, the garden bough shall sway,  
The tender blossom flutter down,  
Unloved, that beech will gather brown,  
This maple burn itself away;

“Unloved, the sun-flower, shining fair  
Ray round with flame her disk of seed,  
And many a rose-carnation feed  
With summer spice the humming air.

“Unloved, by many a sandy bar  
The brook shall babble down the plain,  
At noon, or when the lesser wain  
Is twisting round the polar star;

“Uncared for, gird the windy grove,  
And flood the haunts of hern and crake;  
Or into silver arrows break,  
The sailing moon in creek and cove;

“Till from the garden and the wild,  
A fresh association blow,  
And year by year, the landscape grow  
Familiar to the stranger’s child;

“As, year by year, the laborer tills  
His wonted glebe, or lops the glades;  
And year by year our memory fades  
From all the circle of the hills.”

### APPENDIX III

#### TO THE MEMORY OF ANDREW JACKSON DOWNING \*

By FRANK A. WAUGH

52  
15/  
37

17 ym

**N**EWBURGH has fine parks. It is surrounded by the most ingratiating natural landscape. In the foreground flows one of the noblest and most beautiful of all the rivers of the world. Yet for none of these has this body of men come here today. This great international association meets here, drawn by the memory of one eminent name, — the name of a man whose genius stands out like a steadfast beacon light through all the crowding events of three-quarters of a century of American history.

Andrew Jackson Downing was born in this town of Newburgh, October 30, 1815, and here he lived the whole of that short and wonderful life which until this day breathes its inspiration upon us. He was the youngest of his family, the child of his parents' age, physically weak and slender, but mentally a giant. His parents were poor, and Andrew was reared on the great American diet of plain living and hard work. He had little schooling, the principal feature of his formal training being an attendance of a few months on the Academy in the neighboring town of Montgomery. But he did have the large benefit of work in his father's nursery and of quiet association with this rich and noble landscape, — two things which left a marked impress upon his character and showed their influence conspicuously in his life's work.

\* On August 24, 1914, the American Association of Park Superintendents held its annual convention at Newburgh, N. Y., in commemoration of the centenary of Mr. Downing's birth, at which time this memorial address was delivered.

When he was about sixteen years old, and his school days ended, he had the good fortune to form a warm personal friendship with Baron von Liderer, then the Austrian consul-general in America, who had a summer home here in Newburgh. This acquaintance led to others, and introduced the rapidly developing boy to the company of refined and talented men and women who were to be, aside from this ever-blessed landscape, his principal source of education.

During these years of early manhood he worked hard in the nursery, but harder still upon his studies, scientific, literary and artistic. He was already forming those high ambitions and noble dreams which made him the first of our American landscape gardeners, — for us the discoverer of a new art and the founder of a new profession. His first work — and said by competent witnesses to be his greatest — was the building of his own house and the development of his own grounds. According to all accounts this must have been most consummately done. He then began to develop the general practice of the landscape gardener in much the same form as it is now followed by leading men in the profession. His work was largely on private places in the neighborhood of New York and Newport, his most famous public project having been the grounds in Washington about the Capitol, the White House and the Smithsonian Institution. In the summer of 1850, while on a most inspiring visit to England, he found a young architect by the name of Calvert Vaux, — a name afterward famous in America — whom he brought home with him to be his partner in this professional practice.

For us to-day it is impossible to forget that he was one of the first and ablest advocates of the public park, — in institution then almost unknown and unheard of in America. He aided powerfully with tongue and pen in the strenuous fight to establish Central Park, New York, an institution which has had an incalculable influence in shaping American park plans and policies ever since.

Parallel with his development as a landscape gardener ran his equally notable development as a man of letters.



He quickly became known as the greatest American writer in the field of rural affairs and as a literary artist of genuine talent. His first and most unqualified success was his book on "Landscape Gardening," which was published in 1841, when he was twenty-six years old, a book which stands to-day as a classic and a masterpiece. The following year saw the publication of his "Cottage Residences." In 1845, when he was thirty years old, he gave the world "The Fruits and Fruit Trees of America," another epoch-making work in a totally different field. In 1846, he became the editor of the "Horticulturist," and in this office did the most notable literary work of his whole career. In 1850, he put out his "Architecture of Country Houses." In 1852, he edited the American edition of Mrs. Loudon's "Gardening for Ladies." In the meantime his other works had sold so freely that he had been obliged to prepare several new editions, each one a great advance upon its predecessor.

Then on July 28, 1852, came his tragic and untimely death. When we think of all that he might have accomplished with a few more years of life in this period of his capable maturity we are compelled for ourselves to share the grief of those friends of 1852 who were never able sufficiently to mourn his loss.

These rough outlines of a great and many-sided life must serve our present needs. It is not for me at this late day to add anything to the memorial prepared by his own intimate friends. Nor could I presume to revise the estimate of his character given by such competent authority as his distinguished literary biographer, George William Curtis. It does seem fair, however, for us in our day to try once more the measure of his genius and to endeavor to count what portions of his work have lived to help us. This at least his sorrowing friends could not do in 1852.

Andrew Jackson Downing must be remembered to us first of all as a nurseryman. It was in this field that his life began. In this field he learned great lessons which yielded him the most substantial and obvious help in other lines of work. Moreover it was through his nursery work that he

reached and profoundly influenced hundreds of men in other parts of the country. It is probably true that Downing's staunchest personal disciples were the men who formed their attachment to him at this point.

His architectural work was of very considerable consequence. While undoubtedly it represents that part of his thought which has proved of least worth to us in our generation, yet it was credited in its time with far-reaching influence for good. In any study of his intellect and character it is obligatory to take into the account the wide, serious and faithful study which he gave to this subject.

We are to remember him also as a writer. There are those who believe that his greatest achievements were in the field of literature. This was obviously the opinion of his biographer, George William Curtis. It is easy to join in this opinion when we view those numerous books of his in their several fields and in their several editions; when we consider especially those masterly essays contributed to the "*Horticulturist*;" and still more when we look at all these achievements in the light of the later development of a whole realm of country life literature, now an enormous but then an untouched field.

The literary fame rests upon a most substantial basis, seeing his product had both matter and style. He had real first-hand information to communicate. Much more than that, he had sound personal opinions, the product of careful study by a most extraordinary mind. This information and these opinions were offered to the world in the best literary dress of the times, — in a style clear, finished, distinguished.

Yet it seems to me that we in this day are most of all indebted to Downing for his achievements in the field of landscape architecture. There have been many capable nurserymen in America, hundreds of other writers of ability, other architects of greater influence, but Downing was without a question the founder of American Landscape Gardening. It is here that his work is still the freshest and most vital.

As I look over the work of our great leader in the field of

landscape gardening I see three different aspects of it, in each of which his powerful character has impressed itself on following generations. First and probably least was the professional work in the design of private and public grounds. At the present time none of his authentic works exist except in the most fragmentary condition, and the records of his designs are too meager to be given much careful study. Yet in his own day and in the immediately succeeding years his work was seen by all aspiring young landscape architects and to them was inspiration, law and gospel.

Next, and easily superior to his executed works, were his writings, and preëminently his book on "Landscape Gardening." The influence of these books and essays has been and still is of immeasurable proportions.

The third feature of his service to us, and one which seems to have been widely overlooked, was his practical establishment in America of the profession of landscape architecture, as it is now fashionably called, though he always spoke of it under the good English term of landscape gardening. Other men had unquestionably practiced this art in America before him; but his genius soared so far above all else that had ever been done as to put the whole profession upon a new plane. Other men found it easy to follow in the path which he had opened. Several of these disciples did so well under his inspiration as to have preserved their names to the present day. Frank J. Scott and H. W. S. Cleveland may be named as examples of this immediate discipleship.

Out of this story, which we necessarily trace with so much difficulty, of the personal influence of Downing in the beginnings of the profession, there emerges however one conspicuous incident. Calvert Vaux has already been mentioned as coming to America in 1850 to be associated with Downing in his professional work. This very able and well-trained young architect doubtless had a considerable influence upon his acute and impressionable partner; but it is quite as certain that the stronger qualities of Downing left their impress upon Vaux. The professional work undertaken by them jointly was continued by Vaux after Down-

ing's death. And then a few years later another most fortunate juncture occurred when Vaux in his turn became professionally associated with the late Frederick Law Olmsted. With the long and notable career of Olmsted landscape architecture became an established and recognized profession, and one in which the highest ideals were so firmly fixed as never again to be lost or obscured. This triple association of Downing, Vaux and Olmsted must ever form the great opening chapter in the history of the landscape profession in America.

Finally, and most of all, as we remember Andrew Jackson Downing we come to realize that he was a man of rare and extraordinary gifts, — a genius in the large and good meaning of the word. Any man beginning life in a new country, in poverty, almost without education, and with the handicap of physical weakness, who before the age of thirty-seven years reaches a position of commanding importance in four separate fields, such as pomology, architecture, landscape gardening and literature, and who in each field leaves work to last a century, — such a man is more than a genius, he is a prodigy. His powers obviously and altogether transcend those of ordinary men.

Yet in Downing these prodigious faculties were so mixed and tempered with warm human qualities as to be largely lost to sight. We have been told that in his associations with most men he was reserved, even cold; but in the writings through which we chiefly know him he is always frank and friendly, — the most cordial and genial of companions. We have learned so much to love the memory of the man as to forget the sum total of his genius. And to-day as we revisit the scenes he loved so well and bless ourselves with the inspiration of his memory, and try again to measure the bequest of his life to us, we need not let our admiration for his work in pomology, or literature or landscape gardening stint our thought of his larger genius; nor need we dwell so long upon his superhuman genius as to lose our hold upon the man of flesh and blood who still commands the love and admiration of our common human hearts.

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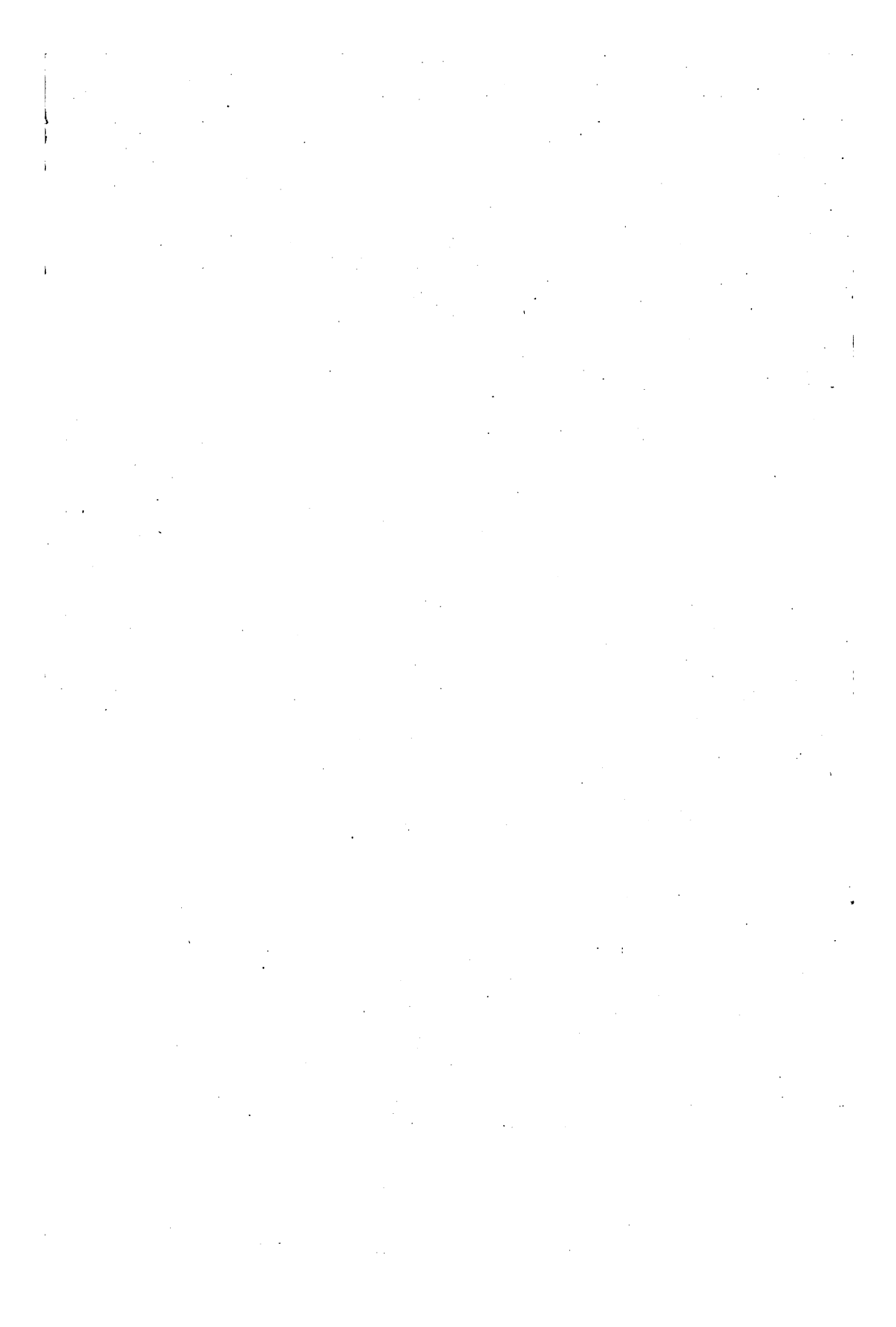
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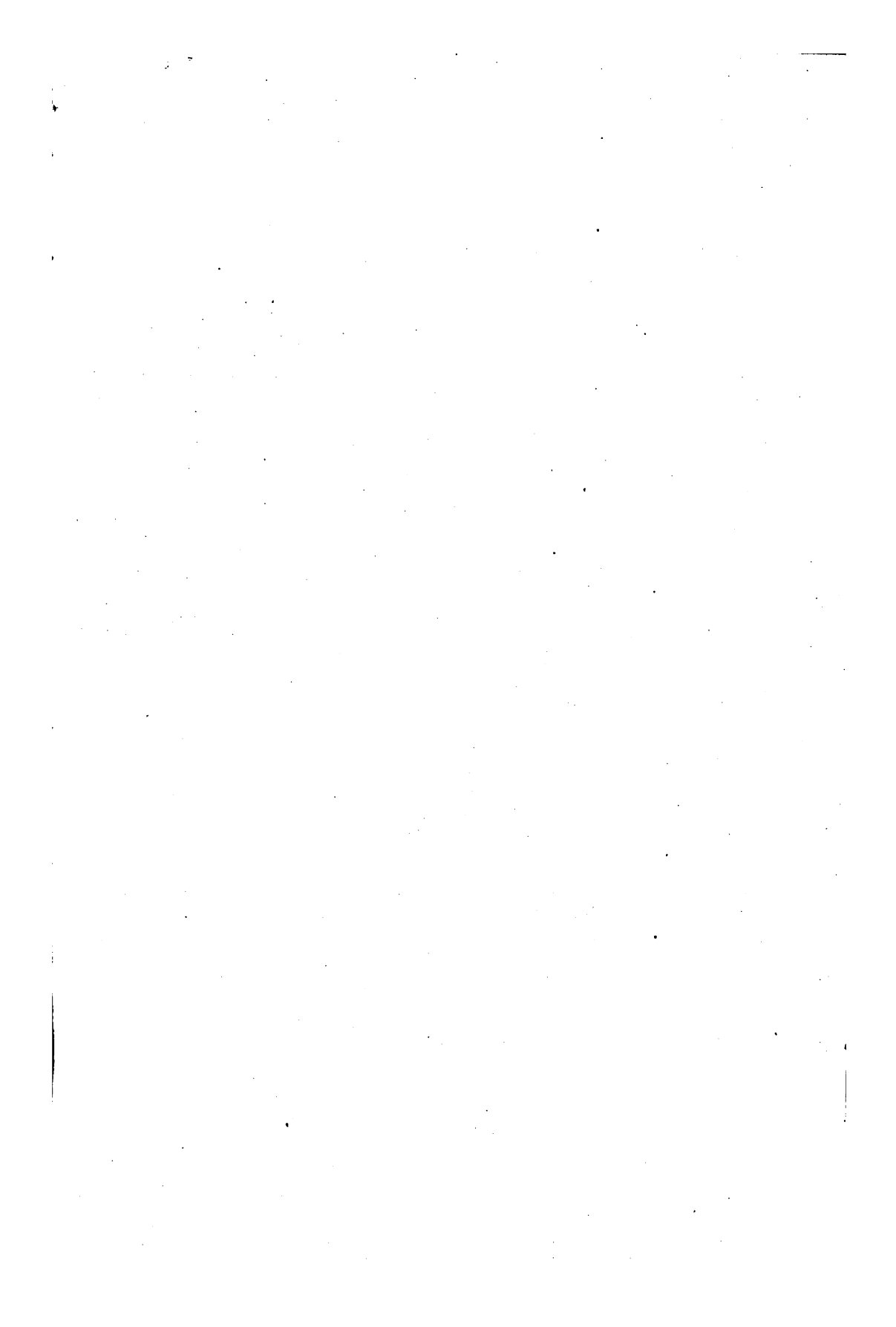
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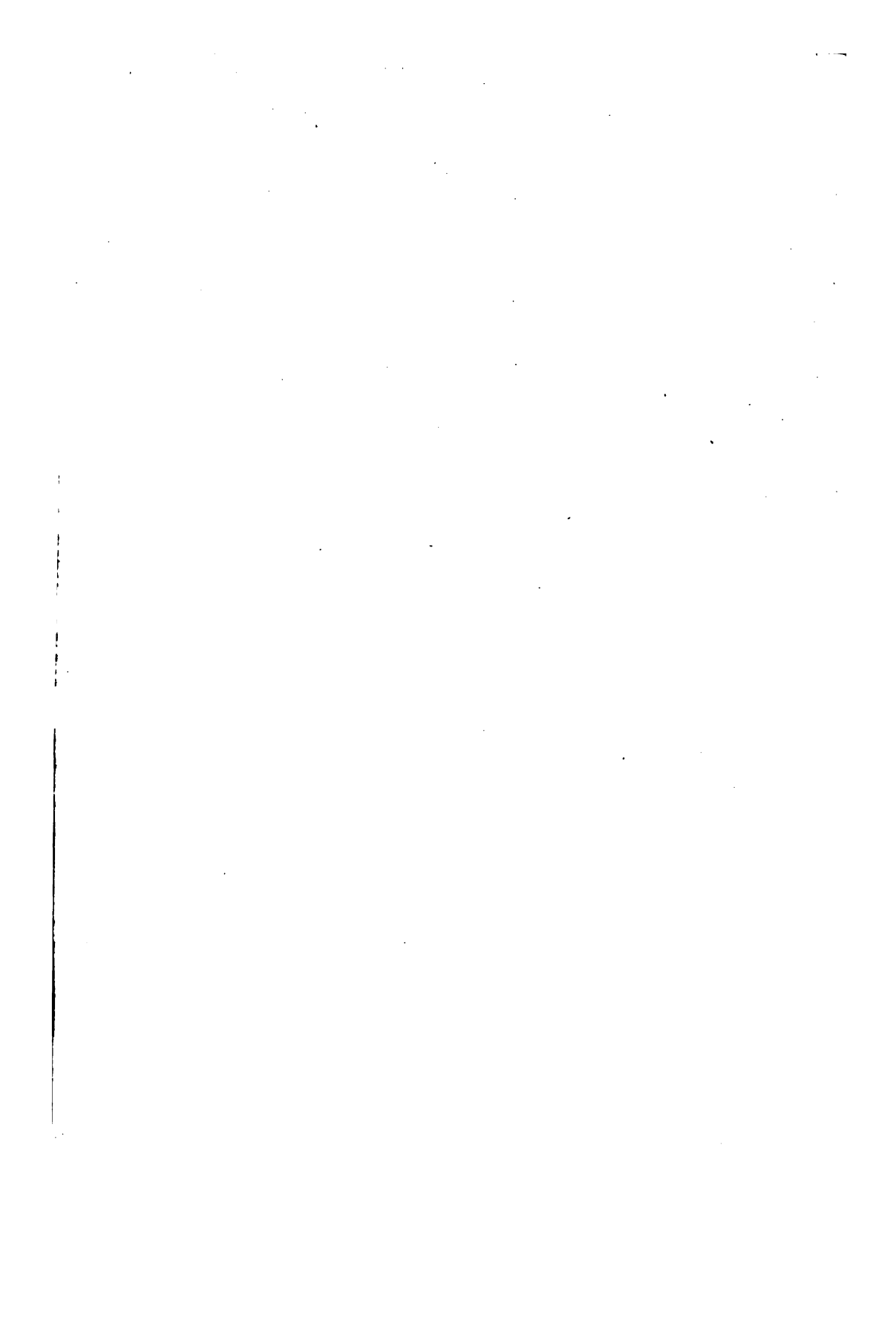












# DATE DUE

MAY 1 1983	JUL 24 1986
JUN 3 1983	JAN 25 1988
DEC 29 1983	FEB 2 1988
FEB 1 1984	NOV 7 1992
JAN 1 1984	DEC 15 1992
APR 2 1984	JAN 2 1995
MAY 1 1984	MAY 17 2001
JUN 1 1984	JUN 05 2001
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